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 We wrote this book, with the singular idea of presenting some tried-and-true recipes for one person to prepare for her or himself. We tried to be budget and nutrition-minded.

 In preparing this book, it quickly became apparent that we should include several sections *in addition* to the recipes. We edited and re-edited the draft and believe we came up with almost everything you need to cook for yourself well and safely. We also included some tips on household management, shopping and budget stretching.

 Most importantly, we came up with household safety tips to keep you safe and well. Some of the safety tips are purposely repeated because we believe household safety is something we all tend to forget—some of us just happen to be more forgetful than others.

 To accommodate your forgetfulness, we publish the recipes at the end of this booklet. We do not fool ourselves that you are going to read the entire book before going to the recipes, but we REALLY hope you will. Food Storage is *very important*. How you store it is as important as how you cook it. *You do not want to ignore the food storage section of this book!*

 Neither do you want to overlook the portion about Household safety and being prepared for an emergency.

**If you are a renter, it is your landlord’s responsibility to provide a working smoke detector in your home. HOWEVER, it is *your* responsibility to periodically test it to assure yourself it is in working order. If the battery is dead, it is your responsibility to buy a replacement.** *Most landlords will check your smoke alarm for you, but you may need to request this. It is a good rule to request that your landlord checks your detector for you on a regular schedule.* ***Check detectors and change batteries in spring and fall when you re-set your clocks.***

**BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME, MAKE IT A HABIT TO MAKE SURE:**

**All electrical appliances are turned OFF. This includes**

**Kitchen appliances, including coffee pot**

**Hair appliances—curling irons, etc.**

**Electric heaters**

**Electric blankets**

**Baseboard heaters:** if they are your only source of heat, turn the thermostat down or off when you are away and *check them often* to make sure no pillows or anything else that can burn is nearby.

# NEVER leave a kitchen when

* the microwave is going
* the toaster or toaster oven is in use
* a burner is on
* the oven broiler is on

**FIRST AID KIT FIRST**

**Every home needs a First Aid kit, because every family deserves one! For the benefit of us who live alone, each one of us is considered “a family.”**

**What we need in our First Aid kit:**

1. Adhesive bandages, also known as Band-Aids™
2. Neosporin™ or some other antibiotic ointment
3. Isopropyl alcohol and hydrogen peroxide
4. Aspirin and other pain-relieving tablets, pills or capsules
5. Gauze bandages and adhesive tape

OPTIONALS:

1. Burn dressings or patches
2. Pain patches
3. Cortisone cream or other applicable ointments
4. Cold medicines: pills, cough drops, cough syrup, ointments, etc.
5. **DIRECTIONS FOR THE USE OF ALL OF THE ABOVE** ***or***

you may take a First Aid class so you know how to use the above products. You may assemble your First Aid kit in a number of ways: 1) You may buy a packaged kit at a store. You can pay anywhere from $1 to more than $50 for a home kit or 2) you may assemble all of the above plus more items that you feel that you will need and put them all in a shoe or plastic box or even a drawer that is in a central location (where you and other household members know where it is). 3) You may even have a purchased kit plus extra items to fill out your personalized kit.

**KEEP ALL MEDICATIONS OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN AND PETS**

*Having a First Aid kit does not mean that you practice medicine on yourself or others.* The kit is for **emergency only**.

**CALLING 911**

**Nine-one-one** is very easy to remember and even easier to call on the phone. It is true that 911 saves lives. It is unfortunately true that *50-90% (*according to the Associated Press) of 911 calls, nationwide, are for non-emergency reasons! 911 is life and death, folks. How would you feel if someone *died* because your watch broke and you called 911 to see what time it is? Take a moment to think of “emergencies.” Discuss them (emergencies) with friends and family. Plainly stated, an emergency is when someone’s life hangs in the balance or when there is a fire or a car wreck.

You’re locked out of your house? Calling 911 will not get you inside your home. You lost your wallet? Calling 911 will not help you find it.

**Conduct the test: Ask yourself “Will calling 911 help my problem?”**

**FIRE SAFETY**

You have likely heard of “defensible space.” “Defensible space” generally applies to foliage and other materials that are around the *outside* of our homes. Being responsible for defensible space means keeping outside areas free of flammable materials. For purposes of keeping us safe inside our homes, it means keeping pillows and other flammables away from heaters. It means turning off the burners on the stove immediately after we are through with them. It means remaining close by while the microwave is running. We do this because people forget—and maybe even have a tremor that causes them to hit 400 seconds instead of 40.

Your home is equipped with at least one smoke detector. Why should you NEVER disarm your smoke detector?

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**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

**From This Old House web site:**

A fire extinguisher can be a lifesaver. Placed near an exit, in an easy-to-grab spot, it can put out a small fire before the firefighters arrive, or at least suppress the flames while you escape.

All household extinguishers are classified A, B, or C (or a combination of these) on the label to indicate which types of fires — ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids, or electrical—you can use them on. Many of the ones sold at home stores are classified A:B:C and fight all three types of fires.

The main distinction among home extinguishers is size. In most cases bigger is better, but sometimes the biggest extinguishers are too heavy to maneuver. (The weight on an extinguisher refers to the amount of chemical inside; the canister adds several more pounds.) There's also a difference between rechargeable extinguishers, with metal valves, and disposable ones, which have plastic valves. A rechargeable one will cost more, but refilling it once the pressure gauge shows that use or time has depleted the contents is still less expensive than buying a new disposable one.

The National Fire Protection Association ([www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)) recommends an extinguisher for each floor. But no matter how many you have, nothing can substitute for the most important safety tool: a fire plan. Make sure everyone in the family knows how to get out in a hurry, where to meet outside, and how to call 911. Even if you think you've put out the fire on your own, don't cancel that emergency call. Leave it to the pros to decide if it's really out.

**CARBON MONOXIDE (CO2) DETECTORS**

It is only a matter of time before carbon monoxide detectors are mandated in homes. Especially if you heat with a fuel (gas, wood, coal) that requires ignition, you should have a CO2 detector in your home.

**POWER OUTAGE**

**Power outage often means *no electric heat and likely no gas heat (because gas furnaces are often equipped with electronic ignitions)***.

What do you do when the lights go out? We may wait for the electricity to come back on and many times, the waiting pays off and the electricity is restored. Other times, our waiting does not pay off.

First, you check to see if others’ power is interrupted as well. Look out the door. If it’s dark outside, you will know immediately. If it is light outside, go to your neighbor and ask if their power is out. No neighbor to ask? Who do you call first? The power company? Mom? A friend? With your family and friends, decide who you will call and make note on your EMERGENCY CONTACT list.

**Just like you have a central location for your First Aid kit, have two or more central locations where you keep flashlights and batteries.**

In the light of day, determine where you wish to have flashlights in your home. The following are suggested:

1. Next to your bed
2. Linen closet
3. Coat closet
4. Under the kitchen sink
5. Under the bathroom sink

It is recommended that you have at least two locations in your home where you have flashlights. Also recommended is the fact that when you remove it to use it, *put it back* when you’re finished. This way, it will be there when you wake up in the middle of the night, reach up to turn your bedside lamp on and NO LIGHT! (This is a really poor time to remember that you left the flashlight on the kitchen table.)

It is also recommended that you have enough new batteries (besides the ones that are in them) to power all the flashlights in your home. Batteries in flashlights tend to die at the most inopportune times. This is why it is recommended that you change your flashlight batteries at the same time you change your smoke detector battery. Before you accept advice about storing fresh batteries in a freezer or refrigerator to “preserve the life of the battery,” this is patently untrue. Besides the inconvenience of waiting for the batteries to warm up to room temperature, there is the risk that your batteries could get damp. Wet batteries are good paper weights, but that’s about it.

The thought of candles is cozy and even a little romantic. It must be said that candles can be very dangerous. If you are used to burning candles in your home and are familiar with the responsibility and danger of having an open flame, you may consider having candles on hand—in *addition to flashlights*. If, however, you are not used to candles and especially if you have pets or small children around, candles should be avoided.

In winter time, no heat for an extended period of time is dangerous. **WHILE YOU WAIT FOR HELP TO ARRIVE or the POWER TO COME BACK ON and before you get *really* cold:** Cover your head, hands and feet: cover your head with a stocking cap, gloves or mittens on your hands and two pair of socks and shoes or boots on your feet. The shoes are very important because they hold the heat that just socks would lose. It’s okay to wear 2-3 pair of socks at the same time, but only so long as you can still get your shoes on.

**ADVICE:** Buy yourself a solar blanket (you may find one at a camping or army surplus store) and keep it in its package until you need it. Hopefully, you will have no need for this blanket and you can leave it be in your **E-KIT** discussed below.

**CATASTROPHE**.

A catastrophe is defined as “a calamity: an event resulting in great loss and misfortune. . .” What this definition does not mention are words like “unexpected,” “sudden” and “unprepared.” Hurricane Katrina resulted in great loss and misfortune; even though people knew Katrina was coming they were *not prepared* for the calamity of loss.

Another catastrophe was 9-11. How strange that our emergency numbers also signify the worst terrorist-caused catastrophe to ever touch American soil! Truly, this was a calamity that taught us all about split-second timing.

Within the definition of “catastrophe” is an assortment of calamities that may also be defined as “Acts of God.” These include **hurricane, tornado, tsunami, earthquake, volcano, wild fire/forest fire, contagious disease outbreak and terrorist attacks**.

**HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHETHER TO STAY OR GO?**

Local authorities should be in charge of telling you what to do. In cases like wild fire, we all are familiar with the “evacuation calls” that take place. In that case, your “GO KIT” is described below.

Situations where you remain in place are more likely when communication with emergency personnel is cut off. While everything in your being wants to panic, tell yourself that this situation is only temporary and practice the deep-breathing exercises described below.

**THE “VULNERABLE POPULATIONS” REGISTRY**

In Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties, there is the opportunity to sign up in a registry of “vulnerable populations.” Following are some definitions, but they are not all-inclusive. Your job and that of your friends and family is to decide if you want to be on the registry. *No one* asking to be on the registry will be turned down. It is feared that people, wanting to protect their identity, will forego this very important and potentially life-saving act.

* medication/oxygen dependent—tell the registry what you need
* have a cognitive or intellectual impairment
* cannot otherwise act on one’s own behalf
* have a service animal/guide dog
* wheelchair user

In anticipation of a community-wide (or bigger) catastrophe, every single one of us needs to be as prepared as we possibly can be. This means a number of things for us folks with disabilities.

The popular notion is that each of us needs to be prepared for a minimum of *three days* with no food, no water and possibly even no shelter! Think very seriously of what you would do at this very minute if the road to your house suddenly disappeared.

Would you have drinking water? Would you have food to eat? Would you have clothes enough to keep you warm?

Would you panic and be unable to think and act on your own behalf?

You are not going to be “the last person on earth.” Chances are that you will have neighbors in the same pickle as you. Of course, each of you will have assembled:

**YOUR REMAIN-IN-PLACE EMERGENCY KIT (E-KIT)**

**3 gallons water—1 gallon per person per day**

**To decontaminate water: Use one part** bleach **to nine parts** water—this would equal about 3/4 cup per gallon

**Food for 3 days**

**MONEY—small bills and spare change**

**Blankets or sleeping bag**

**First Aid kit**

**Necessary prescription medications**

In this kit, you may also have one clean change of clothes for each person in your household. At the very least, you will want clean socks. A jacket is also recommended.

These materials are stored in a plastic tub that accommodates the family of one or the family of four. The family of four may get by with a 50-70 gal. refuse container while a singular family will need a 20 gallons container. There does not appear to be singular expert on the subject of plastics, the consistent message from experts were to: keep plastic storage containers at room temperature (72 degrees), under 75% humidity and in a darkened area. From personal experience, Rubbermaid™, for the price, is the best plastic storage value you can buy. Even with Rubbermaid™, it is wise to follow the above directions.

Please recall that ***all*** of the foods in your **E-KIT** have expiration dates. You should appoint date(s) during the year that you will replace all your food *and water* with “fresh.” This is to say that the box of Ritz crackers in the kit is removed and eaten with the jar of peanut butter that you just removed from your E-KIT. Of course, you replace like food with like food.

**SUGGESTED FOOD SUPPLIES:**

Canned tuna, chicken or meats and nuts—peanuts, almonds, etc.

Canned soups and meals (spaghetti) that are ready-to-eat

Powdered milk, tea, coffee, juices, HONEY!!

String cheese or other individually wrapped cheese are *not* recommended

Peanut butter

Dried fruit—apples, bananas, raisins

Crackers, cookies, candy

**CAN OPENER!!!**

Knife, fork, spoon, plate, bowl

**YOUR “GO KIT”**

The list below is for when you are evacuated to a safe place. This is when it is especially important that you are a member of the registry.

**In a large backpack:**

Your personal identification with card listing your personal emergency info.

Bottle(s) of water

Food—cheese, crackers, beef sticks, nuts, dried fruit

Change of clothes (at least socks, underwear)

Your prescription medications and medical supplies—catheters, etc.

Flashlight, radio, batteries

MONEY—small bills and spare change

Service animal or pet supplies

**DON’T PANIC! OH YEAH?**

anticipating the time when you are very likely going to panic, practice deep-breathing exercises. When you’re not panicked this short exercise is easy: 1) deep breath in, 2) hold it, 3) deep breath out

**REPEAT FOUR TIMES**

**It is a fact that panic can turn any of us inside-out with fear.**

**Practicing the deep-breathing will make**

**ALL THE DIFFERENCE**

**in how you manage panic when it hits during an emergency!**

**BUDDY-UP**

While you consider caring for yourself during an emergency, think about caring for your friends and neighbors. Even if you are in routine contact with friends, family and neighbors, you may consider making a “formal arrangement” with a number of them. Especially during bad weather, have an arrangement to call each other to “check in” with one another. You might set a schedule with a group of trusted friends that you take turns making “wellness calls” to one another, so that each of you gets at least once per day. If your buddy does not answer her/his phone or come to the door, have a plan for who you call to do further checking.

**Especially if you have a friend, neighbor or family member who has a disability or is older, you want to be their “buddy.”**

**STRANGER AT THE DOOR—HOME INVASION**

Do you open the door to someone you don’t know? *No matter* what they say, you should not open the door to a stranger. Even if they are dressed like a policeman and you feel uneasy about letting them in, you may call 911 to say that you have the police at the door. The 911 operator will find out if your visit from police is legitimate. Any others at your door who won’t take no for an answer? Call 911! If you let them in, it could become a life/death situation!

About 30 years ago, the writer of this book let a stranger in to her house. He said that the realtor had told him to ask “the nice lady” if he could check it out for eventual purchase. I let him in and was in trouble almost immediately. I talked myself out of being raped—AND called 911 after he left my home. I could not see the license number on his car; to my knowledge, he was never apprehended.

**It cannot be said often or loud enough that PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY may figure significantly in your survival of a catastrophe. However, 95% of what is described above are normal, everyday emergencies. This is to say that the day is rare when you or someone you know does not encounter at least one situation that you define as an emergency. *Your job* is to keep a cool head. *Your job* is to seek appropriate help. When in doubt, *your job* is to call the #1 Person on your list to ask advice.**

**Attached *to this* publication and replicated below is an EMERGENCY NUMBER placard for you to hang above your phone or on your refrigerator. On it, there are printed non-emergency numbers for police and fire. There is also room for you to write down frequently called numbers. There is even an area where you may establish a schedule to ensure that batteries, food and water are always fresh. Remember, you will also want to rotate your food and water supply at least once every year.**

**Regarding the obvious benefit of refreshing your food supply, yes it is likely that you will never have to get into your E-KIT. However, based on the remote possibility that you will need to get in your E-KIT, having access to fresh food may literally be a life-saver!**

**HOW TO USE THE ROTATION CHECKLIST: In the top row, next to BATT: or FOOD:, list *where they are*. If you need more room to where they are, do it on the back of the card. Why? Because panic blow out the candle of the mind. What if you forget where they are? Next to DATE:, note the last time you refreshed your emergency stash. EASY? It takes self-discipline to do this!**

**911**

**Emergency ONLY!**

**Non-emergency numbers:**

|  |
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| **Police 322-2960** |
|  **TTY 693-7911** |
|  |
| **Fire 322-6300** |
| **CORIL 388-8103** |

**Essential numbers:**

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**ROTATION CHECKLIST:**

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 When considering how you wish to keep your home, there is no hard and fast rule—except to maintain it in a safe and sanitary manner. “Safe” means you do not leave tripping hazards for yourself and guests. It also means that you do not leave appliances on when you’re not using them. It means such fundamental things as ensuring that pillows or other flammable materials are not up against a heater—ever! “Sanitary” means that neither you nor guests get sick from being in your home. Much of the discussion of maintaining a sanitary environment is covered in the food safety and storage section, but much remains about *keeping house*. We will try to outline necessary steps to be taken in maintaining a home that you can live in comfortably as well as one that you will be proud to open to guests. We will address subjects as if they are separate, but as you try them, you will understand how they are intertwined.

1. Clutter. “Clutter” is among the most common problems that we have witnessed—not only with ourselves, but others as well. It is a proven fact that, in many homes, 90% of clutter belongs in the trash. For instance, empty potato chip bags, wrappers from cheese, the wrapping off a roll of toilet paper—where does it obviously belong? Not on the floor or counter, but *in the trash!*
2. Dust. Dust accumulates on hard surfaces. At least once a week, you may wish to dust your furniture. Using a pleasant smelling polishing product (such as Pledge) contributes to pleasure you may gain from this task.
3. Dirt. Dirt accumulates on floors as fast as dust accumulates on furniture. While some of us may sweep and vacuum our floors daily, once weekly is generally sufficient.
4. Spills. Wipe them up immediately. Even if it’s “only water,” that little puddle presents a slipping hazard. Messy spills, not cleaned up adequately, dry and are generally ugly. A good product to use is a household spray cleaner and paper towel. Messy spills, such as mayonnaise or salad dressing are oily and present a slipping hazard. Ice cubes turn into water puddles. Search out that ice cube that “took on a life of its own” before you or a guest goes flying across the floor.
5. Fireplaces, wood stoves, pellet stoves. Follow directions toward cleaning a pellet stove. The instructions for cleaning fireplaces and wood stoves are all headed with a caution about disposal of ash. The number one caution involves being absolutely certain that the fire is dead-out. If there is a question, *do not* put your hand in the ash to determine whether or not the fire is out. DO NOT pour water on ash in the stove or fireplace; you will end up with a big mess! If you cannot wait, this is what you should do: using a fireproof and waterproof container (plastic or metal), shovel the ash into the container in 5” layers. Between each layer, pour water onto the ash. Flying ash makes a mess, so pour it directly into the ash—that is, at point-blank range. Once completed with cleaning the ash out of the stove, store the container well-away from your home or someone else’s. In the carport or on the back deck are not “well-away.”
6. Clothes clutter. Does your room look as if it’s a clothes explosion? An easy remedy to this common problem is developing the habit of hanging your clothes immediately when you take them off. If they’re dirty, of course, you don’t hang them up. They are placed in a hamper, a clothes basket or stuffed into a laundry bag. Having a designated spot for dirty laundry saves you a lot of time on laundry day. You do not have to search; they are right there where you put them!
7. Dishes. Dishes in the sink breed bacteria. They also cause unpleasant smells and cause your kitchen to appear “dirty.” You may consider developing a habit of washing dishes as you use them. Doing dishes for one meal generally is a matter of few minutes. When they are allowed to pile up, it takes much more time. This is not to mention the bacteria that breeds. Dirty dishes also attract bugs.
8. Bathroom. Just as dirty dishes breed bacteria, so does a dirty bathroom. It is a matter of a few minutes to clean up after yourself--this includes hanging your bath towel (not leaving it on the floor) and wiping down the counter after heavy use. “Heavy use” is generally when you prepare to get ready for your day. Implements you use (make-up, shaving, hair care products) should be put away in preparation for the next use. A counter scattered with an accumulation of products may have you swearing that you “lost” something when it may be right there in front of you! Rinsing out the sink is an absolute must after brushing your teeth or shaving.
9. The Great Toilet Seat Debate. Men, please develop the habit of putting the seat down when you are finished. This, even if you live alone and “never” have guests. The habit speaks “class.”
10. The Great Toilet Paper Debate. Changing a roll of toilet paper is not an enormous task and unless there is a physical inability to do so, this must be done as a roll is used up. Having extra toilet paper nearby is convenient, but it’s also a courtesy to guests. We know of at least one person who hangs a fresh roll when guests are coming to the home.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT CLEANLINESS

1. It truly *is* next to godliness.
2. Cleaning products for your home are generally inexpensive.
3. One cleaning product is free—it’s called “elbow grease.”
4. NEVER mix chlorine and ammonia. Since this is hard to remember, window cleaning products (such as Windex) generally have ammonia in them. This is the pungent odor you smell. Clorox Bleach and most household abrasives (such as Comet) have chlorine in them. In their zeal to “super clean” and sanitize their homes, people have made the error of mixing chlorine and ammonia. Many of them are dead. The combination of these two chemicals produces a highly poisonous gas.
5. Like everything else in life, “putting it off” does not make it go away.
6. There are no such things as “housecleaning fairies.” Merry Maids may be the closest thing, but they cost money that you likely wish not to part with.

# YOUR CLEANING PRODUCT PANTRY

## *Household—kitchen, bath, everywhere*

Abrasive cleaners (COMET, etc.)

Dishwasher detergent

Dishwashing liquid

Dish cloths and towels

Floor mop

Furniture wax

Paper towel

Rags—old t-shirts, etc.

***NEVER, EVER* PUT**

**DISHWASHING LIQUID INTO AN**

**AUTOMATIC DISHWASHER!!!**

**If you don’t know, ask why.**

Sponges

Broom

Vacuum cleaner

Window cleaner

Of all the cleaning products listed here, the only one you *really need* is the laundry detergent!

***Laundry***

All-color bleach

Chlorine bleach

Laundry detergent

Liquid fabric softener or

Softener sheets

Stain remover products

+

Liquid dish detergent is excellent for removing greasy stains.

One can of Coke™ or Pepsi™ is an excellent laundry booster for heavily soiled and greasy clothes! (REALLY!)

**TRASH vs. TREASURE**

Before you carry your “garbage” to the curb for pick up by the local sanitation engineer, do you perform an inventory of what belongs in the landfill and what does not?

Recyclables, Combustibles and Compostables do not belong in the landfill

**Recyclables**

All glass

Aluminum cans (pop cans)

Paper (including newspaper, cardboard, magazines, catalogs, phonebooks, cereal boxes)

Plastic containers

Plastic shopping bags

Tin cans

**Combustible (if you have a fireplace or wood stove)**

Paper (otherwise recyclable)

Pizza boxes, cardboard, cereal boxes (otherwise recyclable)

**Compostable**

Vegetable matter—salad greens gone bad, potatoes, “rubber” radishes & carrots, etc.

Egg shells

Coffee grounds

Grass clippings

NO fats or animal products

**GARBAGE** belongs in the landfill!

**Garbage**

Meat products

Anything cooked in fat or oil

Paper that has come in contact with food: organic material

**SO, HOW MUCH “GARBAGE”**

**DO YOU HAUL TO THE CURB**

**EVERY WEEK?**

Coupons are all over the place. They are in the newspaper, magazines, and even *in the mail.*

Especially if you are on a limited budget and most especially if you use the Oregon Trail card, they can positively affect the bottom line of your food budget.

Clipping coupons makes very good sense/cents. For those of us who need to work on bi-lateral skills, tearing the perforated ones are excellent therapy. The rules of thumb for coupon-clipping are:

* Use coupons only for something you would ordinarily purchase.
* Cereal coupons are numerous. This is the only time you may use a coupon for something you do not ordinarily purchase--if you wish to try the cereal, use the coupon.
* Examples of coupons you may wish to *not* use
* “family size” if you live alone.
* coupons for expensive shampoos or hair products when you are satisfied with the less-expensive brand.
* coupons for anti-aging products. It is a proven fact that these high-priced items are no better than soap, water and moisturizing lotion.
* coupons for a prepared meat product such as those from Lloyd’s. Even with a coupon, the purchase of these products is VERY expensive.
* coupons for microwave popcorn. They are mostly issued by the more expensive brands – store brand microwave popcorn may be purchased for much less than the coupon discount offered by others.

***ALWAYS*** TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STORE BRANDS RATHER THAN NAME BRAND PRODUCTS.

##### The Oregon Trail card = food stamps

As you contemplate use of your Oregon Trail card, it is worthwhile to employ logic similar to that used with coupons. In other words, if your card was “real” money (it is), would you buy that Ben & Jerry’s ice cream? Or, would buy a less expensive brand or not at all? Using coupons alongside your Oregon Trail card makes sense (and cents). Shop wisely with your card. Stretching its use may mean the difference between “popcorn for dinner” or an enjoyable and nutritious meal.

When purchasing day-old food, there are several things of which to be careful.

# BAKED ITEMS

* When purchasing baked goods, examine the product for mold.
* The bread should be soft to the touch.
* The best place to purchase day-old bread or pastry is at bakery outlet stores.
* A good source for day-old bread or pastry is through the Gleaners or St. Vincent’s. Do not be embarrassed about accepting any of these products. Presently, there is a glut of food leftover from markets and too much of it is going to the landfill.
* Unless you are going to eat it, don’t buy it because it’s “such a good deal.”

# DELI ITEMS

* ANY product with mayonnaise should be avoided, but most deli sandwiches don’t have mayonnaise on them.
* Read the “pull-date” on deli offerings. Most stores are attentive of food poisoning and do not mark down foods that bear potential for illness.
* The end of a day is the best time, if not the ONLY time, to purchase mark-down deli food (this applies to bakery items as well).
* Hot deli items are not covered by the Oregon Trail card.

# MEAT CASE

* This is the best place to make an economical purchase.
* Beef, pork, lamb and poultry may be good buys.
* mark-down meat should NOT be brown. It may be turning brown around the edges but should not be uniformly so.

# FRESH FRUIT & VEGGIES

* This is the simplest place to determine the edibility of the product
* Red-banded bananas are perfectly okay to buy and may be used in some of the recipes in this book.
* Melons and berries get marked down the fastest. This is because they have a relatively short shelf-life. (Check the bottom of the cup for mold.)
* The skins of melons should be firm—if soft, avoid these. They should also *smell* good. If they smell musty or moldy, avoid them.
* Berries may be accumulating mold at the bottom of the plastic cup in which they are packed. Check for mold and determine whether or not it is too much for you to deal with. So long as you toss the moldy berries, the remainder of them are okay.

**FOOD STORAGE CONTAINERS**

Food poisoning rarely finds its way from the store to your home. It is usually the way the food is prepared and stored that causes one to become ill. The following are ways you may avoid this.

Tupperware® or Rubbermaid® containers

Glad® or Ziplock® plastic containers\*

Glad® or Ziplock® bags\*

Glad® or Ziplock® freezer bags\*

\* the generic alternative works just as well—used margarine containers also work quite well

***You can re-use zip-lock bags!*** Except for the usual cautions concerning meat storage (never re-use a bag that has had meat in it), you can re-use bags that have had cookies, granola, cereal products, etc. You simply shake them out, wash them with hot, sudsy water and drape them, open side down over a glass.

# FOOD STORAGE

The way you *store* your food has as much to do with maintaining your health as does the way you *prepare* it.

* When in doubt, refrigerate.
* Cover all leftovers or wrap them in zipper bags.
* Do NOT refrigerate fruit or vegetable juice in the cans in which they came. By doing so, you are running the risk of breeding the grandaddy of all food poisoning—botulism. This poison is *deadly*.
* If in doubt about refrigerating products, read the label. Surprisingly, many routinely refrigerated items do not need to take up room in your fridge. They are vinegar, pancake syrup, soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce to name a few.
* Bread, buns and pastries. These products mold very easily. For the optimum softness of these products, *freeze* them and defrost only what you need. They may be defrosted in the toaster, even on top of the toaster. Also, in the microwave on the defrost setting. Take care when microwaving bread—the process has the tendency to make the bread “tough.” Most breads may be defrosted quite quickly at room temperature. Place them in a bag to preserve moisture.

**WORK AREA CLEANLINESS**

* At ALL times, wash your hands with soap and water when you begin to prepare food.
* Keep the counters in your kitchen clean and tidy. This DOES NOT mean you pass a sponge across the counter before you begin preparing your meal. It means *washing* the counter with soap and hot water before you begin.
* Always be aware that the sponge sitting by your sink, the one you may use for dishes is NOT the sponge you use to wash down the counter.
* The sponges you use in the kitchen *may* be washed in the dishwasher or washing machine. You may also soak them in hot water with detergent and household bleach (2 cups bleach to a full sink of water) overnight. If your kitchen sink is porcelain, the bleach will remove stains. Even if the sinks are color!
* If you use a cutting board, wash the cutting board with hot water and soap *before and after* you use it. At least once per month, thoroughly scrub your cutting board with a combination of soap, household bleach and hot water. Since you will be using bleach, take care you do not splash it on your clothes—either by wearing an apron or something on which you do not care if you have bleach marks.
* If you have a stainless steel sink, using a scrubber/sponge, thoroughly clean the sink at least once/week.

 **FOOD PREPARATION**

* When preparing chicken, wash it before you cook it. This is true for all meats except hamburger.
* When preparing vegetables, wash them before and after you cut them up.
* Unless you wash it between uses, do NOT use the same knife to cut meat and veggies.
* Do not use the same cutting board for meats and veggies. If you must, cut the veggies first and setting them aside, use the board to cut up your meat.
* When cooking hamburger or turkey burger, cook it until it is DONE—that is, no pink showing. It is unfortunate that e-coli bacteria is most often present in hamburger meat. This does NOT mean you have to burn it or cook it into dry oblivion. The meat has to be *brown*, not black.

**FREEZING MEAT, ICE CREAM, VEGGIES, EVEN *CHEESE***

* When buying frozen products at the store, it is VERY important to pick these products up at the very end of your shopping trip and go home immediately after purchase.
* The very first thing you do when you get home is put frozen products in the freezer.
* Sealed bags of veggies may be tossed into the freezer “as is.”
* If you choose to freeze cheese, leave the sealed wrap on it and then, wrap it again with stretch wrap, a freezer bag or even a plastic bag from the produce department.
* If you purchase meat for future use, freeze it immediately. Wrap the meat as you would the cheese. Now is the time to break down your meat products to smaller, meal-size, portions. Do not stack your packages of meal-sized portions, but place them randomly inside the freezer until frozen. Then, you may stack them.
* When freezing products that you wrap yourself, do your very best to wrap it tightly and leave as little air as possible around the product.
* **Zip lock freezer bags are a good investment. They are heavier gauge plastic than ordinary zip-lock bags. ALWAYS squeeze out as much excess air as possible. *Before* you zip: roll them over onto themselves!**

# DEFROSTING MEAT

There are several ways to defrost meat.

**NEVER DEFROST MEAT BY LEAVING IT SIT AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.**

The same is true regarding running warm water over meat or allowing it to soak in a pan of water until it is thawed. The reason for this is airborne bacteria breed in warm areas. There are two ways to safely defrost meat:

* microwave oven: be certain to adjust the power level of your microwave oven to the setting(s) recommended for “defrost.” Generally, microwaves cook at a default level of 10. You will need to program your microwave to a lower setting. Levels 3 and 4 appear to be among the highly recommended defrost settings.
* in the refrigerator. Defrosting meat forces you to think ahead. Place the frozen meat in the refrigerator an evening or two before you intend to cook it. If the meat is not entirely thawed when you begin cooking, that is okay.

# STORING LEFTOVERS

* Refrigerate your leftovers.
* Open containers in a refrigerator are the worst disservice you may do your leftovers. Left uncovered, they may make you very sick. Not to mention the fact that the environment of the fridge quickly renders the food un-appetizing.
* Zip-lock bags are excellent for storing leftovers. If you don’t have access to them, they may be stored in bags you get in the produce department at the store. Just be certain they are as tightly sealed as possible. The most convenient way of doing this is to tightly wrap the food inside the bag by twisting the open end of the bag. Then, you may place them in the refrigerator with the twisted end under the bag.
* Old cottage cheese, yogurt or margarine tubs may be used as excellent food storage vehicles. Tupperware and the new Gladware-type containers are also very good.
* If you prepare a lunch to take to work the next day, be absolutely certain you refrigerate it in the evening. If you fear you will forget it, post a note on the front door, so that you will not leave home without it.
* Whole-wheat or whole-grain bread
* Fresh fruit and veggies
* Ground turkey instead of beef
* Limit red meat (beef, pork, veal)
* Limit sugar
* Limited or no caffeine
* Dried fruit
* Low-fat or fat-free dairy products
* milk
* yogurt
* cottage cheese
* sour cream
* cheese
* ice milk instead of ice cream
* Granola instead of prepared cereals like Cheerios
* Air-popped popcorn

ABOUT CAFFEINE

If you have trouble sleeping, caffeine may be the culprit keeping you awake. Caffeine is also a natural diuretic, which means it works your kidneys.

The following all contain substantial amounts of caffeine:

* Coffee
* Cola drinks and Dr. Pepper
* Mountain Dew soda
* Energy drinks: Rockstar, Red Bull, etc.
* Fruit—both fresh and dried—including raisins
* Raw veggies—no dippee—lightly sprinkled with garlic salt and other spices
* Nuts: nuts are fattening when eaten to excess.
* Unsweetened granola: can be fattening when eaten in excess.
* Low or nonfat yogurt
* A worthwhile snack (or even breakfast) is granola topped with yogurt
* nonfat chocolate milk—again not to excess
* cereal with nonfat milk
* Popcorn—in the bag and not microwave. Prepared with an air popper and dusted with a butter and salt substitute, this is an economical snack. The healthy part of popcorn is NOT its nutritional value, but its benefit to the digestive tract. Popcorn is also a fun food to dress up with different seasonings. If you are in an Italian mood, for instance, you may use some garlic, basil and oregano to spice things up.

 “What’s a pantry?” you ask. Yes, of course you know what a pantry *is,* but your question is really, “What’s in it for me??”

 Simply put, the answer is: food, toiletries and other sundries.

THE WELL-STOCKED PANTRY

FOOD on hand at all times:

canned fruits and veggies

packaged macaroni or some other pasta product

canned fish (like tuna), chicken, other meat products (Spam?)

Chicken and beef bouillon (pronounced boo-yon and not boolian)**\***

boxes of mac & cheese, Hamburger Helper-type one-meal makers

C-ration-type products—available at Army Surplus

popcorn

depending on your taste: tea bags or small jar instant coffee

sugar, honey, sugar substitute

evaporated milk

powdered milk**\*\***

**\***The reason I suggest this is as an economical and fat-free substitute to chicken or beef stock in a can. Using water, you can re-constitute the bouillon to chicken stock that you will use in the recipe for Quick, Easy and DELICIOUS Veggie Soup.

**\*\***I am strictly averse to *drinking* powdered milk, BUT it does work in recipes that call for milk. Evaporated milk works as well. You reconstitute it with an equal amount of water. That is, if you use the entire can, pour in one can of water to turn it into whole milk. Evaporated milk is a good coffee creamer, but it spoils. When refrigerated, it is okay for up to three days, but it needs to be stored in a covered container and NOT IN THE CAN IT CAME IN!

TOILETRIES:

bottle(s) of shampoo

“Creative shopping” is when your pantry benefits the *most*.

bar(s) of soap (or liquid soap)

tube(s) of toothpaste

new toothbrushes

rolls of toilet paper

rolls of paper towel

It is often difficult, if not impossible, to shop creatively on a fixed budget. The wise shopper needs to do her/his research in order to make the best buys. Do not make the mistake of traveling store to store in search of sale items. The cost in gas and time could put you in the hole.

When your end-of-month resources fall to a perilous low, it is difficult to justify “buying ahead” for your pantry. HOWEVER, if you use the recipes in this book and determine that you can survive on so-called boring meals until your finances or your Oregon Trail card comes in again, you might seriously consider the purchases.

The above pantry can be created for less than $100. Since your Oregon Trail card is likely that much or less for the entire month, you will need to build your pantry over a period of time.

**and how they contribute to tastiness of your meals**

The seasonings listed below are “must haves” for you to make your gourmet meals more satisfying. The ones with asterisks (\*) may be purchased at discount stores (like Wal-Mart) for 50 cents or less.

Oregano\*

Sweet Basil\*

Cracked black pepper\*

Garlic powder\*

Onion powder\*

Onion flakes\*

Parsley\*

Summer savory

Curry powder

Thyme

Rosemary

Sage

Soy sauce

Brown sugar

**WAYS TO LEARN HOW THESE TASTE INDIVIDUALLY.**

Pour one-half cup boiling water and add ½ teaspoon of the seasoning into it.

Stir and smell it. If it *smells* good, it will likely taste good. If you wish, take a little taste. If you get the leaves in your mouth, you may either spit them out or chew them and swallow. Chewing fresh leaves will be pretty intense, so a caution: you may choose not to use this because of the intensity. When cooked, however, their intensity becomes a subtle complement to your dish. **None of the above are at all dangerous to imbibe by themselves, but some of them taste terrible by themselves.**

**Combinations that work**: Brown sugar added to soy sauce = teriyaki!

Soy sauce has *sodium*, so if you are on a low-salt diet, look for low-sodium soy sauce. Soy is a wonderfully surprising seasoning. It adds zest to the bland and is a sensible additive to ground meats instead of salt.

**REMEMBER!** Do not use soy sauce and salt together. This is what is called “redundant.”

**All of the starred above work together**. Of the ones not starred, thyme works well with most. The old song “Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme” is quite true, although we recommend taking it easy on the Rosemary. You may use equal amounts of the other three while decreasing the Rosemary to one-half as much. For instance, one teaspoon of each Parsley, Sage and Thyme, but one-half teaspoon of Rosemary. You may like the taste that Rosemary lends your meal, so increase it to your taste.

**Combinations that don’t work**: curry is pretty much a stand-alone seasoning, so we would say use it all by itself. Curry is NOT hot; when you get something curried that is hot, the peppers added cause the rise in temperature.

### TIPS

* SALT: If you over-salt something (which is very easy to do), a pinch of brown sugar takes the edge off. Be careful that you use pinch(es) in solving the situation. Another tip is to carefully place a paper towel on top of what you are cooking. The towel will draw some of the salt out of it.

* INGREDIENTS: Especially for the seasonings, organize your cooking area, so that you place the seasonings you have used are in an area, so that you KNOW you have used them. The best ways to solve the situation of forgetting what you have already used are one of two things. Either
1. pre-measure all your seasonings and have them in containers for their addition to your cooking masterpiece OR
2. put them away immediately after you have used them. This is what I do since my spices are kept immediately above my cooking area.

### TERMS

* Drink: The question of what to serve to drink with your meal is as simple or as difficult as you wish to make it. Milk is an excellent accompaniment to all meals. Water is the best one there is. To dress it up for company, a slice of lemon is nice. I like to serve mine with clear glasses, the lemon slice on the bottom. Ice on top of it and then the water. You may place it on the lip of the glass or ontop of the water. Wherever it is, it is a nice touch. Good enough for company, but something you may wish to do for yourself. Lemons are relatively inexpensive. You can capitalize on their nutritional value by squeezing the juice into your water. You may also slice them very thin and use half slices. Or, slice them thicker and cut the slice into quarters..
* Fold: If a recipe calls for you to “fold” an ingredient in, this usually means that the ingredient you are including is fragile. For instance, when you add cooked peas to a recipe, you must *FOLD* them in. If not, your recipe could end up with “green streaks.”
* Reconstitute: This has to do with condensed food products. Most of the time, water has been partially or totally removed. In the case of cream soups, they are to be “reconstituted” with milk, but water is acceptable. This is where powdered milk comes in handy.
* Sauté: This is a learned behavior. Most sauté is performed over medium-high heat. The absolute thing to remember is that you NEVER walk away from a sauté. This, because the oil or butter you use requires your absolute attention. Butter burns very quickly, so the process requires your 100% attention. If the phone rings, let it ring. If you must leave it, remove it from the heat. If ANY pan with oil or butter melting in it begins to smoke, remove it immediately from the heat. ALWAYS when frying or sautéing something, have your canister of flour nearby. God forbid it bursts into flame, but if it does, flour will smother the flame. NEVER throw water on a kitchen fire. If the fire catches on wallpaper or anywhere OUTSIDE the pan, get OUT of there and call the fire department. You may use a fire extinguisher to put out a kitchen fire—flour is less expensive and easier to clean up.
* Simmer: This refers to a staple of good cooking. When the recipe calls for you to simmer something, reduce the heat to low and return frequently to stir and ensure that your precious cargo is not burning to the bottom of the pan.
* Stir: You first learned to stir possibly before you could talk. Mudpies! Remember? I remember mudpies that my cousin and I made. Instead of water, we used gasoline. My dad was angry, but moreso, he was relieved that we had not chosen to make a flaming dessert. When a recipe calls for you to stir something, that is exactly what it means.
* Whip: You may try to do this without a mixer and it depends on what you expect of the finished product whether you will do this by hand or with a mixer. For instance, if you are whipping cream, you will likely need a mixer. If you are whipping eggs for an omelet, you may do it by hand. This encompasses a deep bowl and probably a fork or a whisk.

*Be aware* of so-called natural pills or products that you put into or *onto* your body. TV, radio and magazine advertising all have a singular goal: to SELL you their product.

**There is no advertiser who is willing to put money where the mouth is. Even the ones who say something like, “We care so much for you, we will send this to you free,” have non-refundable shipping and handling charges.**

# A FEW WORDS ABOUT

Do NOT use them without your physician’s blessing and consent.

If you are seeing a medical doctor *or* a naturopathic physician, s/he should know what you are taking, but if you say nothing, they don’t know!

If you disagree or disbelieve your physician, that is your right. It is also your *responsibility* to prove her/him wrong. Even if you have done your homework and there are no contrindications to the dietary supplement you wish to take, DO NOT TAKE IT until you have discussed it with your doc. S/he may know something your research did not uncover. With the possibility of your *life* at risk, taking these products is definitely not worth the risk.

Advertisers are very happy to sell you the new fad diet pill, the program that helps you see clearly, the “all natural” product that will grow hair, make people taller, etc. It is a scientific fact that 90+% of these products do not work. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) has responsibility for oversight of prescription and over-the-counter medications we take. However, they have *no control* over “dietary supplements.” The papers and the news are full of stories of people who were either dead or near death before their doctors figured out what was wrong with them!

**Thrift stores, of course!**

Blenders

Coffee makers

Cutlery

Dishes

Food processors

Microwave ovens

Mixers

Pots, pans and skillets

Tableware—knives, spoons, forks

Tea kettles

Toasters

All of the above are easily found at thrift stores. Even if the tag says “works,” check it out on the spot. If you do and it works (95% of the time, it will), BUY it! If you get it home and it doesn’t work, check the power supply and make sure it’s plugged in before you return it. At all times, save the receipt. You may not get an exchange, credit or refund without a receipt. DO NOT purchase anything that says “as is.” That means you buy it, you keep it. If unsure of the store’s refund policy, ask the clerk. You may even request her/him to tape the receipt to the item you are purchasing.

If you have a genuine need and cannot afford the product(s) you need, you may inquire about a voucher, but it is unlikely you will have the desired item to take home with you. Many thrift stores only offer vouchers for items that are necessary to *increase independence* (a TV is likely not eligible). Bend’s Community Center and CORIL have an agreement where they always honor our vouchers.

Small appliances are an excellent gift suggestion. Besides requesting “Peas on Earth” for Christmas, you might ask for a hand mixer or a toaster. You could also ask for items to fill out your pantry.

# BRIGHT—as in→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→

Garage sales

Goodwill

Humane Society Thrift Store

OFCO Thrift Stores

# DARN GOOD BUYS WHEN YOU SHOP WISELY→→→→→→→→

Costco

Food-4-Less

Fred Meyer

Grocery Outlet

Safeway

ShopKo

Target

Trader Joe’s

Walmart

# NOT VERY BRIGHT—you know→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→

Strictly retail stores

Do not be surprised if the bright bulb does not flash over your head if you DARE to walk into one of the “not very bright” stores. You can usually tell they are not into their customers by the fact that racks are shoved so closely together that someone who uses a wheelchair would need a snorkel to *breathe* in those places! HOWEVER, some of them have excellent sales. Beware of sticker shock. Fifty percent off looks and sounds nice, but 50% of WHAT? Half of $20 for one knife? That’s still ten bucks! It is likely that you could get similar at a thrift store for $3 or less.

It is a common occurrence that when you get into one of these stores and see jeans for $60, the $30 pair takes on an air of being “a really good deal.” NOT!

# HUMAN WANTS

book club memberships

CDs and videotapes

chocolate

electronics—TVs, stereos, computers

gadgets

impulse aisle items

knick-knacks

magazine subscriptions

music club memberships

nice clothes

nice house

recreation toys—boats, ATVs, etc.

shoes

video club memberships

## HUMAN NEEDS

food

water

shelter

sleep

elimination—using the restroom

clothes

books

current events—access to news

friends, companions

It is not at all surprising that our wants overcome our needs. Please mark up this page with your judgment of our list, rearrange the lists and add things. The next time you go to the store and see something you wish to purchase, give it your need/want test.

If we did not have to eat, sleep and use the bathroom, our lives would be so much simpler! Further, if we did not need shelter in order to refuel our bodies with rest, our lifestyles would be so very uncomplicated! These are things we *need*. We added books, current events and friends because these are things we feel we *need* to survive well. With your public library nearby, books and current events need not cost you a thing. A radio is considered a luxury in many parts of our planet, not to mention television and the 2-4 sets the average American household has.

# ABOUT THE RECIPES

At times, recipes and information in this book have the appearance of repetition. That is, some information is provided that may appear to be unnecessary. For *you*, they may or may not be. Others may be satisfied with the instructions.

The intent here is to cause the recipes to have “uniformity.” Most of them begin with a small narrative description or possibly just a comment designed to introduce the user and entertain. Cooking can be so much FUN! It can also spark creativity.

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** 350 °

**Cook time:** 1 1/4 hours

All recipes should have this little box to tell you how long it takes to prepare the ingredients, how long and how hot to cook it.

All recipes should begin with ***ingredients:*** As you follow the book, you may say to yourself you don’t need something listed OR you may find you do not have something called for. If you really have a hankering, this is where **creativity** may enter the scene. GO FOR IT! One word of caution: tuna spaghetti does *not* work. Take my word for it; I know.

* The directions with the check mark (like the one at the left of this sentence are step-by-step preparation tips.
* If you choose not to go through the steps, they were well-considered, but NOT set in stone. If you find a shortcut, please let us know.

*If you are a person with a disability for whom this book does not work, please let us know the barrier(s) you face and we will develop alternative instructions that will help you be a successful cook, too!*

**[*Most packets that come with ramen products have a high sodium level. If you are watching your sodium intake, the packets should be avoided. At the end of this section, there is an alternative recipe so you may avoid the sodium.]***

We are using the name Top Ramen© as the generic term to describe all the package noodle products that bear resemblance. This type of product is frequently on sale for 5-6 packages for $1. [to *s t r e t c h*  all packaged ramen, you may add a small can of veggies]

These are ways you may dress it up.

* Add shredded cheese
* Add finely chopped cold cuts
* Add left over meats (beef, chicken, pork, lamb)
* Add boiled egg slices
* Add cooked veggies
* Add chopped green onions
* substitute ½ the water (for cooking it) with white wine

# INGREDIENTS FOR LOW-SODIUM SUBSTITUTION

1 jar prepared low-sodium chicken or beef bouillon

pepper

salt substitute

dried parsley

basil

thyme

lemon juice

for one package ramen:

* 2 c. water
* 3-4 Tablespoons bouillon
* pepper to taste
* 1 ½ teaspoon dried parsley
* 1/2 teaspoon thyme
* a splash of lemon juice added to the boiling water

## TACO SALAD

***ingredients***

1. 2 heads leaf lettuce or 1 lb. prepared salad mix

**Prep. time:** 20 minutes

1. 2 tomatoes
2. red and green onions to taste
3. 1 lb. ground turkey, cooked with taco seasoning
4. ¾ cup grated cheddar cheese
5. 1 can pinto or refried beans
6. black olives
7. ½ bag tortilla chips

in a large bowl:

* toss above ingredients together. The tortilla chips should be broken, but not crushed. Serve with your choice of dressing, guacamole and sour cream.

## GUACAMOLE

***ingredients***

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

1. 1 ripe avocado, peeled, pitted\* and mashed
2. mayonnaise equal to one-third the avocado meat
3. prepared salsa to taste
4. garlic and onion powder to taste
5. splash—lemon juice
* mix above ingredients and serve with tortilla chips

\*save the pit—if you have leftover guac., placing the pit in with it keeps it green and helps prevent it from turning black.

## TOSSED SALAD

***ingredients***

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

1. Prepared salad makings in a bag (1 lb. size)
2. 1/2 cup cooked frozen peas
3. 1/4 cup grated cheddar cheese
4. 2 Tomatoes
5. sprinkling of raisins
6. Bacon-bits to taste
7. 2-3 hard-boiled eggs
8. Sunflower kernels (not seeds, but the little nuts inside the shells)
* Layer all this, beginning with salad and finishing with the sunflower kernels

This recipe makes 3 healthy servings and will last 72 hours when stored (tightly covered) in the refrigerator.

**ZESTY BROCCOLI SLAW**

From Kristi

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

**Ingredients**

1. 1 16 oz. bag prepared broccoli slaw (available in the produce section of most stores)
2. 1/2 cup balsamic or apple cider vinegar
3. 1/2 cup sugar
4. 1/2 Canola oil
5. 1 cup peanuts
6. 1 package Top Ramen—teriyaki chicken flavor
* Mix sugar, vinegar, oil and seasoning packet from the Top Ramen together until well-mixed.
* Toss into slaw
* Add the peanuts and crumbled ramen
* Toss altogether
* Chill overnight

Great for potlucks!

## THE BEST TUNA SALAD SANDWICHES

From Nancy Roberts

# Ingredients

**Prep. time: 5 minutes**

1. 1 can tuna, the water pressed out
2. 1/2 cup mayonnaise
3. 1 tablespoon mustard
4. 1/4 yellow onion, finely chopped
5. 4 slices bread

This recipe makes two sandwiches.

Combine above ingredients until thoroughly mixed. Spread generously on one slice of bread and cover with a second slice. YUM!

For extra flavor, you may spread mayonnaise on both slices of bread. Extra onion is recommended, but you better have the breath mints handy!

## CURRIED TUNA ROLLUPS

From Lynn Metzger

**Ingredients:**

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

1. 1 can albacore tuna or 1 can chicken or 1 cooked chicken breast
2. 1/2 cup mayonnaise
3. 1/4 cup mango chutney—you may substitute apricot or peach jam for chutney
4. 1/2 cup chopped almonds
5. 1 teaspoon curry powder
6. 10” flour tortillas
* Combine the above ingredients, *folding* the chutney in last.
* Refrigerate this for 24 hours before serving.
* On one tortilla, spread 3/4 cup of the tuna mixture, roll up and enjoy!

This is an excellent potluck item and is certain to bring compliments to the cook!

## PERFECT HARD-BOILED EGGS

From Laura

This one is from Martha Stewart and *always* renders you perfect hard-boiled eggs.

***ingredients:***

eggs

water

* place eggs carefully in a saucepan—do not crowd them
* cover the eggs with cold tap water
* bring eggs to boil
* boil them for three minutes
* turn off heat and allow the eggs to bathe for ten minutes
* transfer saucepan to sink and fill the saucepan with cold water
* allow eggs to cool and peel them!

REMAIN IN THE KITCHEN while the eggs are on the stove and use a timer for the three minutes *after* they begin to boil.

THE BEST WAY TO SHELL AN EGG: roll the egg on the inside of the sink until the shell is well cracked all the way around. Voila! The shell should come off, thanks to the membrane on the inside of the shell.

If you are impatient, you may shell them while they are still hot, but not until they have their cold water bath. Be careful not to burn yourself.

## POTATO SALAD

From Kristi

This is good stuff, but it takes time.

**Prep. time:** 45 minutes

***ingredients:***

1. 2 quarts water
2. 1 teaspoon salt in the water
3. 6 medium red potatoes
4. 3 boiled eggs
5. ½ red or white onion
6. ¼ cup sweet pickle relish
7. 1 cup mayonnaise
8. 2 teaspoons cider or Balsamic vinegar
9. 2 teaspoons sugar
10. salt & pepper
11. Paprika

**OPTIONAL:**

1. chopped black olives
2. green onions
3. 1 teaspoon mustard
4. pepperoni
5. cooked chicken
6. peppers—green, red or yellow—these are not hot; they’re sweet
7. your choice of seasonings
8. dill pickle relish instead of sweet pickle relish
* Cook eggs according to above directions. Do this three hours before you begin cooking the potatoes.
* Scrub potatoes in water—warm or cool is your choice.
* Cut each potato into bite size pieces. LEAVE the skin on them!
* Immediately after cutting them, place them into a large pot of cold, salted water that will accommodate the potatoes.
* Cook potatoes over medium-high heat for 20 minutes
* The potatoes are done when you can easily stick a fork into one of them.
* Remove potatoes to sink and run cold water over them until the water in the pan is cool.
* While potatoes are cooling, remove the yolks from the eggs and place into a mixing bowl.
* Smash up the eggs with a fork.
* Add mayonnaise to the eggs
* add vinegar and sugar
* add pickle relish
* add salt & pepper
* Stir this together and set it aside.
* Drain cooled potatoes and dump into a large bowl.
* Mix in the onion and all the optional items you choose.
* Pour on the mayonnaise goo and gently fold ingredients together.
* If you wish, slice eggs on top of your well-combined potato salad
* FINAL TOUCH: VERY gently, sprinkle paprika on top.
* Refrigerate *at least* two hours before serving

YOU *MAY* MIX THE POTATO SALAD IN A MIXING BOWL AND THEN, TRANSFER IT TO A SERVING BOWL. IF YOU SUFFER “BOWL DEFICIENCY,” BEFORE SERVING, YOU MAY USE A RUBBER SPATULA TO CLEAN UP THE INSIDE LIP OF THE BOWL.

This recipe makes two generous servings. It is best if you refrigerate it overnight before eating it. If you choose to take it to a potluck or work, make sure that it is refrigerated until served. I mean, you CAN carry it to your destination, but Never, Ever leave it in a bag under your desk or under the table until time to serve. Picnics are okay, but the salad must be eaten not less than two hours after being removed from the refrigerator. Otherwise, it may “go bad.” You know what they say about potato salad gone bad. Law enforcement doesn’t go easy on this guy. It is likely a felony conviction with no parole.

**CHICKEN (OR TURKEY) SALAD**

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Ingredients:**

1. 1 cup cooked, ground\* chicken or turkey
2. 8 tablespoons mayonnaise
3. 1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish
4. 1 tsp. horseradish (optional)

Combine above in a small mixing bowl

Makes two-three sandwiches—or you may serve in a bed of greens.

\* I use a small food processor to grind cooked chicken. You may also purchase canned chicken

**KNOW YOUR OVEN! Ovens vary, so it is important to know if yours is “hot” or “cool.” You can likely make an adjustment to the oven temperature setting to make up for this disparity. If you wish, you may purchase an oven thermometer, which will tell you the temperature inside the oven—you will still need to adjust the oven setting accordingly.**

# EASIEST PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES EVER!

From Kristi

Except for the stirring, these are the absolute easiest cookies to make. I cannot claim the recipe as my own, since I got it off a Bisquick box.

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** 350°

**Cook time:** 10 minutes

***ingredients:***

1. 2 cups Bisquick or any store brand biscuit mix
2. 1 can sweetened condensed milk**\***
3. ¾ cup peanut butter—smooth or chunky, your choice
4. 1 teaspoon vanilla
5. granulated sugar in a bowl
6. Hershey’s kisses—unwrapped, of course. You may eat no more than four while you are preparing this.

**\*There is an enormous difference between sweetened condensed milk and evaporated milk. Evaporated milk has no sugar in it. Sweetened condensed milk is probably ½ sugar in volume. You will have to use a spatula to get this out of the can—that’s how *thick* it is!**

* Combine the Bisquick and sweetened condensed milk. Mix it *well.*
* Stir in the peanut butter. Mix it *well.*
* This dough will be very thick. It is very difficult to stir—great exercise!
* A mixer with a dough-hook would be great—the weight of this dough may burn up a hand mixer.
* Chill this for at least 2 hours and no eating the dough!
* After it’s chilled, remove heaping tablespoons full and roll into balls with your hands. If the dough sticks to your hands, dust them lightly with flour or the biscuit mix.
* Roll the balls in the sugar and place on a baking sheet, 12 to a sheet
* You will know they are done when they are lightly browned and have begun to spread out.
* Remove them from the pan to a cookie rack or you may use newspaper underneath a sheet of waxed paper (like my mom did in the old days)
* While they are still hot and when on the cookie rack (or whatever), you may *carefully* press a Hershey’s kiss into the middle of each one. DO NOT TOUCH these until they are cool. The kiss will keep its shape so long as you don’t touch it.

These are not “diet cookies,” but are wonderful just the same. Cookies are highly subject to the heat of the oven, so be certain you follow instructions for how long to bake them. If you prefer a softer, chewier cookie, you may wish to bake them for less time than is indicated, but they still need to be lightly browned.

**MERRY KRISTIMAS TO YOU!**

A Christmas variation on the above peanut butter cookie recipe may be made by substituting almond butter for peanut butter. In that case, you would substitute almond extract instead of vanilla. You could also use red and green sugar sprinkles instead of sugar to make it look Kristimas-sy!

You may get such a product as “almond butter” at a health food store. OR, you may make it by grinding one cup of almonds in a food processor. THEN, you would add 2-3 Tablespoons Canola oil to give it the desired consistency.

**EZ to make Cinnamon buns**

from Kristi

In a 9” pie pan, melt:

**Prep. time: 15 minutes**

**Heat setting: 400°**

**Cook time: 12 minutes**

1. 1/3 stick butter
2. 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
3. 2 Tablespoons water
4. cinnamon to taste—typically 1 - 2 teaspoons

8” X 8” baking pan—glass or metal

* stir until butter, sugar and water are well-mixed: should be consistency of gravy—if not, add more water
* cut rounds of refrigerated (7.5 oz.) size biscuit dough\* in half and roll them in the melted butter-sugar mixture. They will be crowded—this is okay.

(If you wish not to cut them in half, this is okay)

Variations:

1. Place dough on top of the sugar-goo and without rolling in the mixture, sprinkle the top with cinnamon sugar
2. Include raisins or pecans in with the butter-sugar mixture
3. Slather the top with melted peanut butter and then, cinnamon sugar
4. Include 1-2 tsp. maple syrup in with the sugar mixture
5. Be creative: choose a variation you think you will like

This takes a very short time to bake—12 minutes at 400°. Since it’s such a hot oven, I keep a close watch. YUM-YUM. This makes a great Sunday morning breakfast treat. For that matter, ANY morning, day or night. Enjoy!

\* You may buy Pillsbury biscuit dough OR you may purchase the much less expensive store brand. It’s a good bet that Pillsbury makes Albertson’s and Fred Meyer and packages it under their names. When I buy it, I look for expiration date first, then for value.

**ORFA\* Cookies**

**From Kristi**

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** 350 °

**Cook time:** 10 minutes

\*ORFA: One Recipe Fits All

**Ingredients:**

1. 1 cup margarine or butter—very soft

**After dough prep:**

**Chill one hour or more**

**Roll into 1” balls**

**Place on cookie sheet**

**2” apart**

**Bake as above**

**Cookies will be light brown**

**With spatula, remove carefully**

**Pour milk and drink with**

**vast numbers of cookies!**

1. 1 cup brown sugar
2. 1 cup white sugar
3. 2 eggs
4. 1 tsp. vanilla
5. 1 tsp. salt
6. 1 tsp. baking soda
7. 3 cups flour
8. 9 oz. chocolate chips
* In a mixing bowl, combine the soft butter or margarine and the sugars until well- combined. (Be sure to pack the brown sugar so that it measures one cup.)
* Add in the following order:
* the eggs and vanilla: mix very well
* 1 cup flour, the baking soda and salt: stir together until they are well-combined
* repeat processes with 2nd and 3rd cup flour: stir together, after each cup, until they are well-combined
* add chocolate chips and mix them in very well

**Variations of this recipe**

**FOR OATMEAL BUTTERSCOTCH COOKIES:**

* instead of 3 cups flour, use 2 cups flour and 2 cups quick-cooking oatmeal
* use butterscotch chips instead of chocolate chips
* follow identical instructions listed above

**FOR SUGAR COOKIES:**

* 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla or use another flavored extract: almond, lemon, orange, etc.
* chill and roll into balls and then roll in sugar prior to baking

Do you want blondies (like brownies, only blonde) instead of cookies? Smash the dough into a cake pan and bake for 25 minutes at 350°. Ovens vary—you may want to check at 20 minutes and choose to bake for more or less time. (Less time makes them chewy)

**PIZZA ROUNDS** or (even) squares

from Kristi

**ingredients**

1. English muffins
2. or sliced bread
3. prepared pizza sauce\*
4. desired meats and cheeses
5. onions, olives, anything else you wish to put on your mini-pizza
* toast the English muffins or bread
* spread pizza sauce on toasted product
* arrange toppings on pizza, cheese last
* place pizza under broiler or inside toaster oven
* stand by to watch the cheese as it begins to bubble

\*you may make pizza sauce, using one small can tomato sauce, summer savory, basil and oregano. You will need to bring this mixture to a quick boil in a sauce pan. Store the finished product in a small plastic tub. Tomato sauce is already salted, so there is no need to add salt. You may use pepper to taste.

# “EMERGENCY” BREAKFAST

***ingredients***

1. 1 or 2 slices toast
2. ¾ cup hot milk
3. maple syrup, jam or jelly, honey or sugar
* Tear the toast into bite size pieces—or, with a knife, you may cut the toast into small squares.
* Heat the milk until it begins to throw off steam.
* In a bowl, pour milk over the toast and sweeten to your desire.

 **(EGG) FRITATTA**

This is an egg variation that is similar to an omelet. I recommend you double this recipe and eat it two - three days in a row. Depending on ingredients, this is good for any meal you wish.

* 4-6 eggs, beaten until frothy (bubbles on top)

**Prep. time:** 20 minutes

**Heat setting:** 350°

**Cook time:** 20 minutes

* salt, pepper and garlic powder to taste
* 1 teaspoon milk for each egg used
* Chopped cooked veggies as desired
* Chopped meat as desired
* Grated cheese, remembering you wish to save some for the top of your fritatta.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 20 minutes. Halfway into baking cycle, sprinkle top with grated cheese.

# QUICK & EASY OMELET

***ingredients***

1. eggs

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

**Heat setting:** low & med

**Cook time:** 3 – 5 minutes

1. cheese
2. veggies—including onions, olives, tomatoes
3. cooked ground turkey OR
4. ham OR cooked bacon OR sausage
5. leftovers that are appetizing

***you will need the following for your basic omelet***

* 2 –3 eggs
* salt, pepper and garlic powder to taste
* 1 teaspoon milk for each egg used
* Optional: prepared mustard (yes, the kind you put on hotdogs!) to taste
* beat the eggs, milk and spices together until frothy (bubbles on top)
* THEN, prepare a small non-stick skillet
* heat the skillet until a spatter of water skips across the bottom
* spray skillet with cooking spray
* decrease heat on skillet to medium-low
* pour egg mixture into skillet
* gently lift edges of cooking egg mixture, allowing runny part to run underneath the cooked part
* continue lifting the edges, going around the pan, until runny part is almost gone
* pile in your selection of ingredients onto one side of the omelet
* flip the other side to cover this mixture
* remove from heat and cover for 3 minutes and enjoy!

# NEVER-FAIL TENDER-COOKED BEEF OR PORK

**Prep. time: 5 minutes**

**Heat setting:** 225 °

**Cook time:** 2 hours per pound

from Kristi

***ingredients***

3 – 5 lb. roast beef or pork

* roll in ground pepper, salt bottom of covered pot
* place meat in pot, cover, and place in 225° oven
* leave covered (no peekee\*) for 2 hours *per pound*

\*Optional: 1 hour prior to finish time for the roast, toss in potatoes, onions, carrots, rutabagas, turnips or any combination of above—all cut into bite-size pieces. Arrange veggies around the meat and as much as possible, place veggies in the juice surrounding the meat. Salt and replace cover. Increase oven heat to 300° Cook for the remaining hour.

After cooking, meat will be fork-tender and yummy. You may cut it into bite-size chunks for service as pot roast.

You may shred the meat with a fork. The shredding process works best when the meat is still hot. The shredded meat may be used in sandwiches, tacos, enchiladas.

## NEVER-FAIL TENDER-COOKED CHICKEN

CHICKEN (bone in): roll in ground pepper, lightly salt

* Skin side up\*\*, lightly sprinkle with your choice of parsley, garlic, thyme (highly recommended), basil or another spice you like
* Bake covered (no peekee) for 1 hour *per pound*

\*\*To save on fat and calories, remove skin when chicken is raw

# MOM’S ENVY CHICKEN

from Kristi

After preparing chicken in the above manner, you may cover it with one of the following

**Prep. time:** 5 minutes

**Heat setting:** 225 °

**Cook time:** 1 hour per pound

* mushroom soup—with one-half can of milk
* prepared sauce: barbeque, sweet & sour, Alfredo sauce, etc.

Cover and place in oven for an additional 20 minutes

Serve with rice, salad and veggies. Mom will *beg* you for the recipe!

## ENCHILADAS &

## BURRITOS

from Kristi

# ENCHILADAS

**Prep. time: 20minutes**

**Heat setting:** 350 °

**Cook time:** 30 minutes

***ingredients***

corn tortillas

shredded beef or chicken

cheese

onions

chopped black olives

prepared enchilada sauce

* lightly brown tortilla(s) in a skillet prepared with cooking spray
* place shredded meat in a line down the middle of the tortilla
* top with shredded cheese
* chopped onions to taste
* chopped black olives as desired
* top this mixture with one-fourth cup enchilada sauce
* carefully roll tortilla and place it rolled-end down in an ovenproof dish
* top with prepared enchilada sauce
* microwave for 4 minutes or bake at 350° for 30 minutes
* for the last 30 seconds in the microwave or last 4 minutes in the oven, top with shredded cheese

# BURRITOS

A variation of this recipe is BURRITOS. Flour tortillas only, add heated refried beans and replace the enchilada sauce with taco sauce. Microwaving is unnecessary, but if you do, roll the prepared burrito in a paper towel before microwaving on power level 7.

**ENCHILADA PIE**

From Kristi

**Prep. time: 20minutes**

***Heat setting: 350 °***

***Cook time: 25 minutes***

**Ingredients**

18 corn tortillas, cut in pie-shaped pieces

Fry the tortilla chips until “near-crisp” stage—barely browned

Being sure to blot excess oil, set aside on paper towel.

Prepare:

* 1 medium red or white onion—chopped
* 1 can small ripe olives—chopped
* 3 cups chicken, pork or beef\*—cooked with above recipes OR
* 3 cups ground beef cooked with taco seasoning
* 8 oz. grated cheese—your choice—I prefer the “Mexican” variety
* One 20 oz. can Rosarita Tortilla sauce

Season meat with cumin, garlic, oregano, cayenne pepper, taco seasoning, chili powder: your choice of seasonings. “Oregano!” you say. Yes, oregano. It is fact that oregano is a frequent addition to Mexican fare. As with all seasonings, don’t go overboard.

**Assembly:**

in a 9 X 13” baking dish:

layer one-half of chips on bottom of the dish

Layer one-half meat, onions, olives and cheese on top of chips

Drizzle one-half sauce over this mixture.

Top with remaining chips and repeat above. Reserve 3/4 cheese to sprinkle on top.

Bake—serve immediately with sour cream. Salsa may be served as well.

# FAJITAS

from Erin

***ingredients***

½ lb. ground turkey

**Prep. time:** 20 minutes

**Heat setting:** low & med

**Cook time:** 20 minutes

1 can ranch style beans

1 white onion

1 green bell pepper

tortillas

cheese

sour cream

* Brown turkey and mix the turkey with the beans, which you have warming on the stove. Set aside.
* Slice the onion and bell pepper and sauté with olive oil in a medium skillet. Set aside.
* Spray cooking spray into a large skillet. Heat tortilla and add a bit of each mixture. Add sour cream and cheese if you wish. Fold tortilla and when it is brown, turn over and brown other side.
* Serve with green salad

**FANTASTIC AND EASY TORTILLA SOUP**

From Kristi

**This recipe would starve without a can opener!**

***ingredients***

**Prep. time:** 20 minutes

**Heat setting:** low, med & high

**Cook time:** 5-8 minutes

1. 1 lb. ground beef, turkey or chicken
2. ½ pkt. Onion soup mix or one small chopped yellow onion
3. Taco seasoning for 1 lb. beef Or the following spices:
4. 1 – 1 ½ tsp. cumin
1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. summer savory
1/2 - 1 tsp. garlic powder--NOT garlic salt
5. 1 20 oz. can Rosarita Enchilada Sauce
6. 1 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes
7. 1 15 oz. can pinto beans (not to be confused with refried beans)
8. ¾ cup water
9. 10-12 oz. pkg. frozen corn

**Toppings**

Shredded cheese

Sour Cream

Fritos Scoops

**Brown:**

1 lb. ground meat with 1/2 envelope onion soup mix or one small yellow onion

**Simmer together:**

1 20 oz. can Rosarita Enchilada Sauce--use only Rosarita brand (because it’s *the best*)

1 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes--juice included
1 15 oz. can pinto (not to be confused with refried) beans--juice included
3/4 cup water

When the pink is gone from the burger, add either 1/2 packet taco seasoning to burger or
1 tsp. cumin
1/2 - 1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. summer savory
1/2 - 1 tsp. garlic powder--NOT garlic salt
S&P to taste

When the tomato mixture is simmering, crank the heat on the burger and fry it to seal in the seasonings.  Scoop sizzling burger onto the simmering sauce.  Combine.  Into remaining burger drippings, toss one can (drained) corn.  Season with chili powder, cumin and fresh garlic.  Fry until corn is browning.  This is very fragrant--makes you feel like a gourmet cook!

Toss fried corn into simmering stew. Combine.

You may serve immediately with grated cheddar cheese topping, Fritos Scoops in a halo around the melting cheese and sour cream on the side.  It is likely better when it is allowed to sit overnight on the front seat of your sub-zero refrigerator. :-)

NOT low-cal by any means, but REALLY good.  Also, since there is salt in all the canned stuff, take it easy on adding salt.  I used it sparingly on the ground beef.

**TUNA CASSEROLE**

from Kristi

***ingredients***

1. noodles

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** low & med

**Cook time:** 1/2 hour

1. 1 can tuna
2. 1 can cream of chicken or cream of celery soup
3. ¼ cup milk
4. 2 teaspoons margarine
5. 1 cup frozen peas
6. potato chips
* begin cooking 6 oz. of the noodles according to package instructions and
* while they are cooking:
* open can of tuna and drain the water
* open the can of soup
* measure out the milk
* cook the peas
* when the noodles are done, drain them, put them back into the pan you cooked them in and stir in the margarine
* Gently fold in ingredients.

OPTIONAL:

Dump this mixture into an ovenproof dish, top with potato chips and bake for 20 minutes at 350°

This recipe will provide two meals. Store remainder in a covered container.

in the refrigerator.

## LONZO’s EASY BUFFALO WINGS

***ingredients***

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

**Heat setting:** 325 °

**Cook time:** 1 1/4 hours

1. chicken wings
2. soy sauce
3. Wright’s Liquid Smoke

Wash chicken wings and cut apart at the joints. Discard the ends.

Arrange chicken pieces, so they touch but are not tightly crowded, in an ovenproof cooking pan.

* Sprinkle chicken with soy sauce
* Drizzle liquid smoke over the chicken
* Be sure to cover each piece with both of the above
* Bake in 325° oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes
* While it is baking, baste every fifteen minutes

Serve with Stovetop stuffing mix, salad and a vegetable.

# QUICK, EASY AND DELICIOUS VEGGIE SOUP

from Kristi

This is a really good “clean out and use the produce in your vegetable drawer” recipe. When in doubt, do not use veggies that may be past their prime. You will know these guys by the blue hair they’ve begun to sprout. The ingredients listed below are merely representative of what you may use. If you have only one leftover vegetable, try it! The fewer veggies you have, the more you may be tempted to try more seasonings. Go crazy, but not so off the wall that you render your dish inedible. I made something once even the dog wouldn’t eat!

***ingredients:***

1. Carrots

**Prep. time:** 25 minutes

**Heat setting:** low & med

**Cook time:** 30 minutes

1. Turnips
2. Onions
3. Potatoes
4. Celery
5. Peppers—red, green or yellow—these peppers are sweet, not hot
6. Cabbage
7. Spinach
8. Tomatoes
9. and any other vegetable except lettuce
10. Salt, Pepper
11. Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme or any other seasonings you may wish to try.
* Cut the above ingredients into bite-size pieces.
* Heat oil in a skillet, add and stir-fry the above ingredients in the order in which they are listed.
* Now is the time you may add half your seasonings.
* After tossing the seasonings among the veggies, turn the skillet to low and cover.

In a large pot that will accommodate your veggies:

**STOCK:**

* 2 cups water to boiling point
* add chicken bouillon according to package directions
* add one can tomatoes (if you have them and wish to do so)
* add the other half of your seasonings and the contents of your stir-fried veggies.
* Cook on low until the veggies are done. If they are cooked when you add them to the soup, turn off and let them sit together for a while or eat it right away.

Allowing them to sit gives the stock and the veggies time to become acquainted. Making this 24 hours ahead makes for the BEST soup.

The ingredients listed are devoid of amounts since this is dependent on what you have in your refrigerator.

# THE EASY I LOVE LASAGNA RECIPE

from Kristi

***ingredients:***

8-10 lasagna noodles

1 can cream soup—cream of mushroom, chicken, celery, broccoli, etc. OR

2 small cans tomato sauce

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** 350 °

**Cook time:** 1 1/4 hours

1 can cheddar cheese soup

6 oz. mozzarella, ricotta and/or cottage cheese

1 can black olives (optional)

Cooked meat (optional)

Seasonings: 1/2 teaspoon garlic; 1 teaspoon each: oregano, basil and parsley

In a saucepan, combine the tomato sauce and cheddar cheese soup or the can of cream soup and can of cheddar cheese soup. Add one can water to the tomato sauce combo or one can milk to the cream soup mixture and stir until combined. Add the seasonings and bring to a simmer and continue simmering for 5 minutes.

* Spray an 8” X 8” baking dish with cooking spray
* Pour one-fourth of your soup mixture into the baking dish
* Lay *uncooked* strips of lasagna noodles side-by-side
* Cover the noodles with assorted cheeses and pour one-fourth of sauce over this
* Repeat this process until you have used up your sauce.
* You may sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top
* TIGHTLY cover this mess and bake at 350 degrees for 1 1/4 hours.
* NO PEEKEE! The steam trapped inside is necessary to cook the lasagna.
* After you remove it from the oven, you may sprinkle with some cheese and allow it to melt before serving OR you may set it under the broiler until it bubbles. Stay right there and watch it. It will not take long for the cheese to bubble—maybe less than 30 *seconds!*

# LOW-GUILT FETTUCCINI ALFREDO

from Kristi

There is no such thing as no-guilt Alfredo, but this is as close as it gets.

**Ingredients:**

1 ½ cups uncooked fettuccini, linguini or thin spaghetti, cooked according to package directions

1 can cream soup with ½ can milk

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Cook time:** 20 minutes hour

1 can mushrooms

1 cup raw spinach or any frozen green vegetable

½ cup parmesan cheese

1 teaspoon garlic powder or 3 garlic cloves crushed and lightly sautéed in 2 tablespoons butter.

Seasonings: oregano, basil, summer savory, pepper

NO salt—the soup has salt in it

* Heat soup, milk and mushrooms together
* Add parmesan cheese to heated mixture and, stirring frequently, reduce heat to low
* Add garlic product
* Add spinach, frozen veggies or another green veggie\*
* Stirring frequently, simmer on low for 20 minutes.

\*if you are using a canned veggie, you may add it after the cooking process OR you may serve your vegetable separately.

## BAKED SQUASH

From Kristi

Fall is an excellent time to take advantage of all the *winter* squash on sale at the store. Among the most popular is the acorn (or Danish) squash. Others are Hubbard and Butternut. Squash is an excellent source of carotene, but it is also very high in starch. When serving this, you may eliminate other starch from your meal. It works very well with the above quick-cooked meat or chicken recipe.

***ingredients***

1 acorn squash

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes

**Heat setting:** 400 °

**Cook time:** 1 hour

butter or margarine

salt & pepper

Winter squash have extremely hard shells. If you are not confident with the sharp, serrated knife that it will take to cut it, ask someone else to do it for you—the people in produce at Albertson’s have cut them in half for me. Cutting it open is not the ONLY dangerous activity associated with preparing squash. Baking it at high heat (400°) for one hour in a standard oven bears potential for burning yourself when you remove it from the oven.

***preparation***

* cut squash in half
* remove seeds, goo and discard
* smear butter or margarine on the exposed “meat” of the squash
* salt & pepper to taste
* place side-by-side, cut side up, in ovenproof baking dish or pan
* bake until fork-tender (about one hour)
* Remove from oven and scoop out servings
* Mash it and add more butter and salt & pepper to taste

# VARIATIONS ON SCALLOPED POTATOES FROM THE BOX

From Kristi

It seems awful to resort to boxes and cans when we cook, but when we wish to do it easily and inexpensively, we must.

**Cook according to package directions.**

***ingredients:***

1 box store brand scalloped potatoes\*

1 can cream soup

* prepare according to directions, EXCEPT
* substitute one can of soup and
* pour it into a measuring cup
* add milk until you have reached the amount of milk the recipe calls for.
* that is, if the recipe calls for 1 cup milk, the can of soup is 7 ounces, so you add milk to the soup to make 1 cup. That is only an ounce of milk, but it is the moisture the recipe calls for!
* season with your favorites\*

\*remembering, of course, that soup already has salt in it. Also, the boxed potatoes have salt.

My favorite soup to use is broccoli cheese. Of course, it will be more economical if you forego the soup. There is no law against seasoning your potatoes before you cook them according to directions.

## THE BEST, EASIEST BAKED TURKEY

from Kristi

WOW! This one is *so easy* that even you will ask yourself for the recipe

It looks like a lot of work, but it’s not. The directions take longer to read than to *do.*

***ingredients***

1. 1 turkey, frozen or fresh
2. Stove-Top stuffing and “fixings”
3. salt & pepper plus your favorite seasonings
* Chances are that you will buy a frozen turkey. Allow this bird to thaw in your refrigerator. It is okay to move from your freezer to fridge 2-3, even 4 days prior to cooking.
* *Under no circumstances* do you allow the bird to thaw at room temperature. If you find yourself with a frozen turkey the day before you need to cook it, call your local extension office (State office listings in the phone book) for advice on quick-thaw methods.
* remove the giblets, neck and other goodies from the neck and the cavity of the bird. (Many people overlook the neck cavity and are dismayed to see paper leaking out of their baking bird’s neck.)
* Throw all these goodies into a pan, add 2 1/2 cups lightly salted water. You may wish to toss in some herbs, garlic, onions. . . Cook on low heat for two hours. Set aside and use the liquid to moisten dressing. You can also chop up the giblets—the gizzard, heart and liver—and add them to the stuffing.
* your choice whether you remove the wire or plastic holding their legs together—I prefer taking it off, but it is a chore—especially if you have “shaky hands” like I almost always have
* IMMEDIATELY prior to roasting your turkey, fill it with hot tap water and prop the turkey in the corner of your extremely clean sink and allow the warm water to heat the inside of the cavity for 5 – 10 minutes.
* Dump the water out and holding it by the legs, season the inside with salt, pepper and whatever other seasonings you wish to use. I recommend thyme and even a little parsley, rosemary and sage. Remember the song: Simon and Garfunkle didn’t know it, but they were giving us the recipe for an excellent roast turkey. BE CAREFUL WITH THE SEASONINGS! If you are fearful, just go with the salt and pepper.
* Toss the turkey into a roaster pan, slather on olive or canola oil all over the exposed skin and seal with aluminum foil or if the lid of your roaster fits well, that is good enough.
* Bake this bird at 325° for 20 minutes per pound until there is one hour remaining for it to cook.
* Uncover for the final hour and let your bird fly in the oven for that final hour to allow it to brown.
* You will know your turkey is “done” when the legs wiggle freely in your hand. Do NOT poke it with a fork—the juices running out is moisture escaping from your turkey.
* The covering you used in the initial roasting helps it to retain moisture. It WILL NOT be dry.
* This is the best, easiest way to cook a turkey.

OR

* The new bake-in bags are really nice and cut the baking time, so be sure to cook according to directions that come with the bag.
* When you use the bake-in bag, the turkey will brown, so it does not need to be released from the bag until you are ready to serve.

**Turkey is VERY inexpensive meat. If you have few or no people with who to share your turkey, you may store it in zip-lock bags for single or double-serving future use. Use freezer gauge zip-lock for storage in your freezer.**

**DID YOU SAY STUFFING?**

For those of us who are stuffing-challenged, there is a product called Stovetop Stuffing. Remembering to use the juices you made from the goodies, prepare according to box directions (using the juices instead of water called for) and *gently* stuff your bird (*before* you bake it). A 15 pound (or less) bird takes less than one to one full box. Bigger than 15 pounds, you will likely want up to two boxes. (You may want to make additional stuffing that you cook in a casserole dish.) Stove-Top Turkey flavor is available as is chicken and other flavors. Even this old bird (Kristi) prefers Stove-Top to other stuffing mixes and especially to using bread cubes. Here are options that you can add to make it more interesting:

Sage Onions Celery Bacon Raisins Apple chunks

Mixed Nuts Ground sausage Lil Smokies Corn Olives

Again, stuff your turkey as you would dish yourself up stuffing on your plate. You do not mash down your stuffing on your plate. Do NOT pack the stuffing into the cavity of the bird. Stuffing is claustrophobic! If it oozes out of the turkey during baking, this is okay. The exposed stuffing is going to get more of the juices and will likely be a little toasty. You may end up drawing straws over who gets to eat this crunchy morsel.

**The gravy is the final chapter in the life of a turkey.** If you wish not to bother making gravy, canned gravy is an easy substitute (but not as good as “the real thing”). Like turkey, the gravy may be frozen in a zip-lock bag.

**UNCANNILY “HOMEMADE” GRAVY**

If possible, purchase chicken gravy, which is available for sale at grocery stores in cans or jars. If not, brown gravy will do.

To the gravy, add:

A mixture of sautéed celery and onion

Garlic powder

Seasonings that you used with the turkey

NO salt (unless it is unsalted gravy)

Extra pepper

Other seasonings as you desire—sage goes especially well with turkey

Chunks of turkey that you scrape off the bottom of the roasting pan—this is a surefire way to fool people into thinking it’s homemade.

Make twice as much gravy as you think you will need. It freezes well and is good, all by itself—even on toast.

As stated earlier, turkey is very inexpensive meat, but it is also a very healthy source of protein. In it goes at 6 and out it comes 3 – 5 hours later. This is a great source of turkey sandwiches, turkey salad, turkey hash, (recipes included) etc. So you do not tire of eating it for breakfast, lunch and dinner, make sure you have freezer bags for storage.

**TURKEY HASH**

***ingredients:***

1. 1 cup cooked turkey, cut into chunks

Prep. Time: 20 min.

1. 3-4 boiled or baked potatoes
2. 1 small chopped onion
3. 1 clove garlic
4. ¼ tsp. sage or other seasonings you like
5. salt & pepper

Heat 1 tablespoon butter or canola oil in a medium fry pan:

* Fry potatoes, onions, garlic and seasonings until potatoes are brown and crispy
* Add turkey and toss to warm

Optional:

* Rice instead of potatoes
* No oil: use a nonstick fry pan
* Scramble eggs in separate fry pan and toss in at the very end of cooking

# E-Z TRAIL MIX

from Kristi

In a bowl, combine

**Prep. time:** 5 minutes

* ½ cup raisins
* ½ cup chocolate chips, carob chips or M&Ms
* ½ cup sunflower nuts, peanuts, mixed nuts, or any nuts you wish
* 1 cup granola or Chex cereal and/or
* 1 cup Cheerios
* optional: any dried fruit or candy that you wish

Toss above ingredients and store in a plastic bag

## FROZEN LATTÉ

***ingredients***

Cold decaf coffee

Carnation Coffee Mate in your choice of flavors\*

**Prep. time:** 30 seconds to one minute

* Fill a tall glass with ice
* Pour in Coffee Mate until one-third full
* Fill to top with coffee
* Stir to mix
* Sip through a straw to extend time of enjoyment

\*This is the product in the dairy case near the milk. It is NOT the powder variety. I recommend hazelnut flavor.

## THE "I JUST WANNA BE LIKE GLENN" RECIPE

from Sarah

***ingredients***

one cup low fat fruit blended yogurt
1/2 cup low fat granola
mix and enjoy a healthy and filling meal or treat

add fresh or frozen berries for an extra special treat!