

Freezer Cooking Basics



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Introduction

Freezer cooking has been a lifesaver for me. There are quite a few nights each week, when we get home tired from running all over town for various errands and activities. It is a blessing to be able to reach into my freezer, grab a meal, put it in the oven and an hour or so later, we have a home-cooked meal ready to eat.


I'm sure your family is no different than mine and if you are tired of spending a fortune on store bought freezer meals and takeout, keep reading. We'll cover some of the basics of freezer cooking and then dive right in with a few recipes that I think you'll enjoy as much as my family has.

When you're ready to learn more, take a look at my Freezer Cooking Made Simple ebook. You can order it here

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/ebooks/freezercooking.htm>

Let's dive right in and of course you are welcome to email me at susanne@hillbillyhousewife.com with any questions or comments. If you have a great freezer recipe I would love to know about it as well.

Let's get cooking.



Susanne Myers – The Hillbilly Housewife

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The logo for Hillbilly Housewife features the word "Hillbilly" in a large, blue, cursive script font. Below it, the word "HOUSEWIFE" is written in a smaller, blue, all-caps, sans-serif font.

What Is Freezer Cooking

For many reasons, in today's busy society, the idea of freezer cooking is catching on. It is much more nutritious than cooking commercial frozen meals, ordering take out or eating fast food. Freezer cooking is also convenient for the busy parent because between work, after school activities and other household duties, freezer meals are a great alternative.

However there are still many people who are not quite getting the concept of what freezer cooking is and what the rage is behind it. Some may think that freezer cooking is just taking something out of the freezer and cooking it. The concept goes way beyond that. Freezer cooking is a meal planning idea that when utilized right, can make the difference between 30 minutes and 4 hours of extra time.

In simple terms freezer cooking is preparing meals in bulk and then freezing the rest for later.

Freezer Cooking can be likened to an assembly-line cooking method designed to fill the freezer with two weeks' to two months' worth of home-cooked dinner entrees. Believe it or not, in a single day, freezer cooks can make large quantities of food and pull together 14 to 30 entrees for the freezer.

But don't let the thought of cooking all day long scare you because you can also cook a meal at a time in bulk and freeze what's left for dinner. In other words, every time you cook a meal, just cook a little extra and freeze it. The bottom line is that in the long run, it will save you time and money to prepare meals ahead of time and freeze them for later.

There are many names for freezer cooking. It is also known as Once a Month Cooking or OAMC, frozen assets, freezable meals, investment cooking, and few other names. Not to worry because it really all boils down to Freezer Cooking.

There are many recipe books available for freezer meals, or you can easily incorporate your favorite recipes into larger batches of freezer meals. Be sure to include the whole family in on planning your meals for freezing.

Freezer cooking is a very convenient way to prepare healthy meals that your whole family will benefit from. By taking a few simple preparation steps you can become a freezer cooking whiz in no time at all. You just have to be willing to do the extra cooking and you are good to go.

Benefits Of Freezer Cooking

When you think of the benefits of freezer cooking, you can do in four words - time, money, convenience and nutrition!

Freezer cooking saves you time because you are not cooking every night and you are able to use that time to do something else productive or just relax and enjoy a good book. You are also not running out to the grocery store as often because with freezer cooking your meals are usually planned ahead. That means you have a shopping list, eliminating the need for those last minute runs to the market.

When it comes to money, you save with freezer cooking in many ways. One way you save is by keeping that shopping list mentioned earlier. With a shopping list you are less apt to buy on impulse and that saves you money. Another way you save money is because you usually buy in bulk in preparing for freezer cooking. It is known fact that when done the right way, buying in bulk saves money and even time.

Can you imagine the end of the year savings and what you can do with that money? How about a family vacation, money for college, or a get-a-way for mom? There are so many possibilities as to what you can do with the money you can with freezer cooking.

Convenience is another benefit of freezer cooking. Not only are the meals readily available but you are not the only one who has to prepare dinner. If you have older children who know their way around the kitchen and understand kitchen safety, then you can have them pull out the meal and prepare it. In essence, all they are doing is thawing and cooking. Even your husband can get in on the action.

Freezer storage spells convenience also because each morning all you need to do is remove the evening's entree for reheating at dinnertime. How easy is that?

When you are providing a steady supply of home-cooked meals, you are promoting good nutrition. No need to be concerned with trips to McDonald's at the end of a long day when you are tired or rushed. There will be plenty of meals at home for you to take out the freezer and prepare for a healthy dinner the family can enjoy and benefit from.

Freezer cooking offers options that anyone can benefit from. So what are you waiting? Start freezing that food today.

How Freezer Cooking Can Save You Time and Money

The rewards of freezer cooking are that you can save money, save time and have a hot, home-cooked meal each night. This is good, because this method requires planning and effort. If you are planning a full day of cooking, it is no light matter. But the benefits nonetheless outweigh the initial work involved in freezer cooking.

If you think about, you are probably already freezer cooking in one way or another. You may cook a big pot of chili and decide to freeze half for a later date. Or maybe you make cookie dough that you place in the freezer so that there is always a desert in the house. You may even make homemade vegetable broth and freeze it in ice trays for later dates.

That is a good idea but without proper planning, you are likely to waste your efforts and your money. Usually when we do things like that, the food gets pushed into the back of the refrigerator without another thought. It is only when we are cleaning the fridge that we remember we had that chili or those meatballs in there. By then they are frost bitten and no good.

Freezer cooking promotes efficiency and eliminates waste. Entrees are labeled, wrapped, and bundled with items needed to complete the meal. No more staring inside that mystery freezer container, wondering: "Is it barbecue pork, red beans and rice, or my son's science experiment?"

With freezer cooking you plan and planning always saves time and money. You take the time to make shopping lists, cook ahead of time, and prepare for the full day of cooking. This frees up your time and puts more money in your pocket because you are not running out to the store every week burning up gas, and buying items not on your list. You save money because you become a smart shopper, learn to look for the deals, and buy in bulk.

Cooking with the freezer in mind is a wise and smart thing to do. You can be a more effective household manager and have more time for the things that you really need to get done or just want to have the time for.

Your freezer is ready to be your cooking buddy. You can save time and money by applying the techniques of freezer cooking to your home management efforts. Are you ready to accept the challenge?

Freezer Recipes

Freezer Waffles

- 1-1/4 cups milk
- 6 tablespoons melted margarine (3/4 of a stick)
- 2 medium eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons baking powder (1 tablespoon)
- 1-3/4 cup whole wheat flour

Get out a large bowl. Pour the milk, margarine and eggs into the bowl. If you are melting the margarine in the microwave, you can melt it in the bowl first, and then add the milk and eggs. Mix these up really well with a whisk or a fork, or electric beaters. Add the salt, baking powder and flour. Beat the batter with a whisk or electric beaters until it is smooth. Preheat your waffle iron according to the instructions. Oil it with a pastry brush if necessary. Use a measuring cup to measure 1/2-cup of batter into each waffle section. Close the waffle iron and allow the waffles to bake for about 2 minutes, or according to the instructions in the manual. When the waffles are well cooked, they should be pretty easy to loosen up with a fork or a chopstick. Gently lay the waffles on a plate and continue cooking until you use up all of the batter. Be careful not to overfill the waffle iron because the extra batter will just spill off and make a big mess. This recipe makes 6 waffles.

When the waffles are cooled place a piece of waxed paper on the counter. Place one waffle on the wax paper.

Place another piece of wax paper on top of the waffle. Then add another waffle.

Continue alternating wax paper and waffles until all the waffles are stacked and ending with wax paper.

Wrap tightly in freezer wrap. Freeze.

Waffles are good for up to 2 months.

To reheat place the waffles in a toaster on low setting.

You can also place waffles in an oven to reheat. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Place then directly on the oven rack and bake 3 to 5 minutes or until heated through.

Freezer Meat Loaf Recipe

I love the fact that this recipe allows me to make two meat loaves at the same time. If you are really ambitious, you could even double the recipe and cook four at a time.

- 3 pounds ground beef
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 3-1/2 cups milk
- 1 cup minced onion
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp ground pepper

Combine all ingredients. Divide into two foil loaf pans (9"x5"x3"). Wrap, label and freeze.

Remove from freezer and unwrap 2 1/2 hours before cooking. Preheat oven to 350F, cooking for 2-1/2 hours. Shorten cooking time by removing from freezer in the morning, checking for doneness after one hour of cooking.

Pizza Pasta Casserole

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 jars (28 oz each) spaghetti sauce
- 1 pkg (16 oz) spiral pasta
- 4 cups (16 oz) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 8 oz sliced pepperoni

Cook spiral pasta noodles according to package instructions. While pasta is cooking, in a large skillet over medium heat, brown ground beef and onion together until ground beef is no longer pink; drain fat. Stir in spaghetti sauce and pasta, once noodles are cooked and drained. Spray 2 9"x13" baking casseroles with non-stick cooking spray, and divide mixture into both casseroles evenly. Sprinkle each with cheese and top with pepperoni. Cool if needed, then cover and freeze.

To cook: Thaw casserole in fridge overnight. Bake at 350F for 35-40 minutes or until heated through.

Slow Simmered Ground Beef Stew

- 1 1/2 lbs. lean ground beef
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 carrots cut into chunks
- 2 potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 lb. button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 eggplant, cut into chunks
- 4 C of tomatoes, chopped
- 3/4 C of water
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/4 tsp thyme

Place the ground beef in a heavy soup pot over medium heat.

Brown the beef for 10 minutes or until no longer pink.

Drain the beef well and skim off any accumulated fat left in the pan.

Place the oil into the pot and allow the oil to heat.

Add the carrots and potatoes and stir fry for 10 minutes or until browned on all sides.

Remove the vegetables from the pot and set aside in a bowl.

Place the mushrooms, zucchini and eggplant into the pot.

Stir fry the vegetables for 5 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and stir to combine.

Carefully pour the water into the pot.

Sprinkle in the pepper and thyme and blend them into the mixture well.

Place the meat, carrots and potatoes back into the pot.

Bring the stew to a brisk steady boil.

Place the heat on low, cover the pot and simmer the stew for 25 minutes.

To reheat allow the stew to partially thaw in the refrigerator. Place the stew into a soup pot over low heat. Simmer the stew for approximately 1 hour or until completely heated through.

Summer Time Vegetable Soup

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 C of celery, chopped
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 2 C fresh tomatoes, diced
- 6 C of chicken broth
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 C of red bell pepper, diced
- 1 C of yellow summer squash, chopped
- 2 C chicken, cooked and diced

Place the oil into a soup kettle over medium heat. Add the onion, celery and carrots and cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the tomatoes to the kettle and stir to combine. Pour the broth into the kettle then sprinkle in the pepper and salt. Stir well to blend the ingredients together.

Bring the broth to a steady boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer the soup for 30 minutes. Add in the bell pepper and squash.

Recover and continue simmering for 15 minutes. Stir the chicken into the kettle and cook uncovered 10 minutes.

To reheat frozen soup, place the soup into the kettle. Place the kettle over low heat until the soup has thawed. Adjust the heat to medium and allow the soup to cook approximately 20 minutes or until heated through.

Learn More About Freezer Cooking

Now you know a little bit more about freezer cooking and the many benefits to be had if you do it.

Would it be worth it to you to learn how to create nutritious meals while saving you time and money? If you're holding up your hand or jumping up & down then you're be the perfect candidate for [Freezer Cooking Made Simple](#).

Let us show you important strategies for preparing the meals quickly & safely; how to keep your freezer stocked with delicious, quick, nutritious home-made meals; and we'll even provide you with a bunch of tasty recipes & tips to get you started. We want to help you turn "No Time!" into "No-time".

You can get your copy of Freezer Cooking Made Simple here <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/ebooks/freezercooking.htm>



[Freezer Cooking Made Simple](#)