

Pressure Cooker Tips and Tricks

- **Natural Release Method:** this pressure release method (simply doing nothing and letting the cooker cool until the pressure has dropped) is recommended when you are cooking foods that will not have the tendency to overcook such as potatoes, beans, soups and stews. Fully cooked meats will be more immediately tender if the natural release method is used.
- **Quick Release Method:** this pressure release method (turning the Pressure Limiting Valve to “Exhaust” to release steam) is recommended only when you want to stop the cooking process immediately, or when trying to achieve a medium or medium-rare degree of doneness in meats. It is NOT recommended to use this method when cooking foods with high volume of liquid since there may be liquid splatter from the ventilation in the Pressure Limiting Valve
- **Steamer Racks:** If you don’t have a rack that will fit into the pressure cooker, you can use a number of home remedies. The easiest is to crumple up some aluminum foil and place this in the bottom of the cooker. Place your food on top. You can also use whole carrots and ribs of celery in a criss-cross fashion to elevate your food from the bottom of the cooker.
- **Brown Foods First:** Browning meats and some vegetables first will give a more flavorful result.
- **Use a Sling to Remove Dishes:** You can use oven-safe ceramic or metal dishes in the pressure cooker (anything that is oven safe is fine). To help move the dishes into and out of the cooker, make a sling by taking a long piece of aluminum foil, folding it in half lengthwise twice until it looks like it is about 26-inches by 3-inches. Place this under the dish and hold both ends to lower the dish into the cooker and then just fold the ends over the top of the dish. To remove the dish from the cooker, grab the folded ends and pull up.
- **Cooking Rice:** When cooking rice, the maximum amount of rice allowed for this 4-quart pressure cooker is 4 cups of uncooked rice.
- **Frozen Foods:** Only cook individual cuts of frozen meats that are up to 1-inch thick. No need to change the timing. Pressure will not be achieved until the internal temperature has reached a preset level. It will take longer to achieve this level when cooking frozen foods. It is not recommended to pressure cook larger cuts of frozen meats such as a whole roast, a block of frozen ground meat or a whole chicken.

- **Pressure Cooking at High Altitudes:** If cooking at altitudes above 2000 feet above sea level, add 5% of cooking time for every 1000 feet over the 2000-foot base level.
- **Adapting Recipes for Pressure Cooking:** Prepare all ingredients as stated in the recipe, ensure that there is at least 1 cup of liquid included in those ingredients, and reduce the cooking time by 50% of the recipe. Check the food and then add more time if necessary – it is better to undercook and add more time, than it is to overcook and regret it!
- **Don't Overfill the Cooker:** Do not fill the cooker more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full so that there is still room for pressure to build safely and so the valves cannot be clogged with food bits.