

# Crock Pot Chicken and Dumplings



*Homemade comfort food is a great way to enjoy family time on a busy school night!*

It's Back to School time once again and my schedule is totally in chaos. I am never going to get used to that 6 am alarm and the child zombies I have to wake up for school. Coffee has yet to be made or consumed before the school bus comes, so I feel like it's a mini celebrations every morning when we get to the corner on time!

But there is something so indulgent about the 7 am hour now... it's quiet. I can take just a few minutes to get all the food into the crock pot and have dinner started for the day. If your chaos continues until you go to work/gym/meetings/etc. you can prep parts of this meal the night before, to make it even easier. Cut the veggies and refrigerate. I'm a big fan of measuring out all of the seasonings and putting them in [one of these](#) so you can just dump them in the morning with much less effort. (THIS IS ALSO A GREAT TRAVEL TIP- PRE-MEASURE

SEASONINGS AND STORE IN [THESE CONTAINERS](#) FOR MEALS YOU ARE MAKING AWAY FROM HOME!) I'm also in the habit of using [crock pot liners](#) so I don't have to even deal with a messy clean-up. After dinner, I just throw the bag away and wipe out the crock pot... this is a huge benefit when I'm using the same crock pot multiple days in a row.

You can vary what veggies you put in this dish; we like carrot and onions, but you can also add cut up celery, frozen peas or green beans if you'd like. It will make the dish more like a pot pie, but there is nothing wrong with that! Having no veggies is totally acceptable too!

I try to cook from scratch, but I did opt to use one cream soup in this dish. It just helps with the flavor and thickening the sauce. If you prefer, you can buy [organic concentrated soup](#) to keep the ingredient list limited to words you can pronounce. You can also substitute chicken stock for the water, but it's not necessary. If you do use boxed stock, I would recommend leaving out the teaspoon of salt.

This dish is great for a weeknight meal that also doubles as delicious leftovers for lunch. It also freezes well, so go ahead and make a full batch and save the excess for another time. Hope your Back to School chaos is manageable and those early alarm clocks someday get a little easier. At least dinner is set to be low and slow!

## **Crock Pot Chicken and Dumplings**

**Prep Time: 20 minutes**

**Cook Time: 4-5 hours**

**Serves: 6-8**

1 medium sweet onion, chopped

1/2 lb baby carrots, cut into thirds

1 t. [prepped minced garlic](#) or 1 clove, minced  
1 t. dried basil  
1 t. dried thyme  
1 t. dried dill  
1 t. salt  
1/2 t. black pepper  
2 bay leaves  
1 can cream of mushroom soup  
3 c. water  
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs (approx 4 pieces)

For dumplings:

2 c. flour  
1 T. baking powder  
1 t. salt  
1 T. softened butter  
3/4 cold milk mixed with 1/4 cup cold water  
1 t. dried parsley flakes  
1 t. dried dill

Put veggies, seasonings, condensed soup and water into the crock pot and give it a stir to combine. Place chicken pieces in next and push down to submerge as much as possible. Cook on high for 4 hours. Remove chicken and shred in a bowl, then add back to crock pot and stir. Set to high for another hour and bring back to a simmer while you make the dumpling dough. Combine all dumpling ingredients in a separate bowl and then

slowly drop by tablespoon into the crock pot. Do this step quickly so the crock pot retains as much heat as possible. After all dumplings are dropped, put lid on a cook for 20-30 minutes. Dumplings should plump up and be soft and moist. Serve 1-2 dumplings with each bowl of dish.

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## Crock Pot Stuffed Green Peppers



This recipe is all about using up LEFTOVERS. I don't mean the extra serving from the [Crock Pot Celery and Leek Soup](#) you made over this cold weekend so you can have a delicious hot lunch to start the week, or the corner pieces of [Crock Pot Vegetarian Lasagna](#) that you purposefully didn't scoop out so you could nibble on the cheesy goodness again after the kids are in bed, I mean the small containers of random single

ingredients that you can't bring yourself to throw out.

Stuffed peppers are the perfect solution to this ongoing drama of being single. Ingredient, that is.

I did make lasagna last week and didn't have a chance to make homemade sauce, so I bough (gasp!) a big jar of chunky spaghetti sauce. I also rolled sushi and had one sad bowl of white rice left. So I stopped by the store and picked up a few fresh peppers— because even though it was a separate trip, I rationalized that I was actually doing a service by cleaning out the fridge.

DISCLAIMER: this next statement is not political, religious, or meant to have any greater meaning in life. I don't really believe in gender... of bell peppers. That's right, there's a myth that you can judge the gender of a pepper based on the number of bumps on the bottom of the bell. Male peppers are a tripod with three bumps and females are more voluptuous and display four proud bumps instead. Farmers and cooks have tried to determine if there is a taste variety, increase or decrease in the number of seeds, or what causality actually exists to determine the gender, but I have yet to see scientific proof on this topic. Lack of proof does not discourage me from believing that once again, we can say that size does matter and so do the number of bumps. I think they are called male and female just as an easy way to differentiate, but that there isn't actually a gender connection to the bells, since they grow the same seeds and reproduce in the same way.

I prefer to use the female, four bump variety, when I make stuffed peppers for no greater meaning than I think they stand up easier in the crock pot. If you are going to cut them in half before stuffing, then it doesn't really make a difference, but I like to stuff my peppers whole. When they start to get soft, the three bump chumps tend to tip over and the contents and liquids spill out. So if you can, try to find full, robust "females" to stuff with your meaty goodness. (I HAVE A FEELING THAT I SHOULD REPEAT THAT DISCLAIMER AGAIN

HERE, YOU NAUGHTY LITTLE READERS.)

A normal serving would be one full pepper, but I like to make three peppers and then a few extra meatballs. That's right... I turn my leftovers into leftovers. Sometimes, the kids just prefer the meatballs to the peppers and that's fine with me, too. My oldest son tells me he doesn't like peppers or onions, but doesn't realize they are already chopped up and cooked in the meatball. He tells me that dinner was "so good" in the same voice that my nana used to say those words. And then she would suck in air, like it was grabbing up the last morsel of goodness from that bite.

### **Crock Pot Stuffed Green Peppers**

**Prep Time: 10 minutes**

**Cook Time: 5 hours**

**Serves: 3-4 people**

3 green bell peppers, with four bumps on the bottom

1 lb. 80/20 ground beef

1/4 sweet onion, finely chopped = about 1/2 cup total

2 c. cooked [white medium-grain rice](#)

1 t. dried basil leaves

1/2 t. ground celery seed

2 T. tomato paste

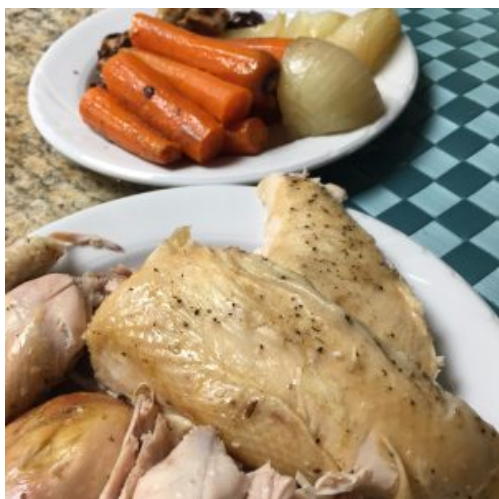
2 c. marinara or spaghetti sauce, chunky preferably

Cut top inch off each bell pepper and scoop out the seeds and

pithy parts. Cut the green parts off the top part and finely chop. Mix beef, chopped pepper and onion, seasonings, rice, and tomato paste. Stand peppers up in the crock pot and using your hand, gently fill each pepper pot with meat. Push mixture into the sides so that air is removed and maximum capacity is reached. Use any remaining mixture to make meatballs; place them in the crock pot surrounding the peppers. Pour marinara sauce over the stuffed peppers and meatballs. Cook on low for 5 hours. Serve immediately (overcooked peppers will fall apart and lose all remaining texture).

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## Crock Pot Whole Freaking Chicken



Just FOUR ingredients to make this delicious dinner!

Hello from South Carolina! This is my first post since relocating to Hilton Head Island and I'm so glad to have my

crock pot unpacked and start getting settled in. I don't know about you, but after eating out for days on end, we start to miss our favorites dishes.

Nothing warms my heart more than hearing my kids ask me to make specific meals. Our first meals when my kitchen "re-opened"? My youngest asked for pasta carbonara (because it's a good belief in life that bacon makes everything better!). My oldest asked for [taco night](#); hard and soft tortillas are a requirement- it needs to be both or none at all.

But then I got to pick! I wanted something easy to make and easy to clean up. So of course I used [my crock pot](#)!



Use root vegetables to make an "edible trivet" in the crock pot.

This recipe seriously only has four ingredients. And after a day of low and slow cooking, you can serve a whole freaking chicken. If you'd like to play with the flavors, try using different root vegetables as the "edible trivet" or rubbing the bird with different seasonings. By perching the bird on top of the veggies, the meat won't be soaking in liquid while it is cooking and the drippings with flavor the meat with all the delicious goodness.

Other recipes recommend rubbing the skin with oil or butter, like you would if you baked the chicken in the oven, but I



disagree. The skin is not going to really crisp in the crock pot, so the added calories of the lube are really not necessary.

When you try this recipe at home, please post it to the [Dinner Is A Crock Facebook page](#) and let us know how you tweaked the recipe to make it your own!

## **Crock Pot Whole Freaking Chicken**

**Time: 6-8 hours**

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Serves: 6**

3-4 lb whole chicken, skin on, giblets removed

6 whole carrots, peeled

1 sweet onion, quartered

1 T [Mrs. Dash salt-free seasoning mix](#)

Rinse the chicken inside and out with cold water and then pat dry with paper towels. Shake the Mrs. Dash seasonings on the outside of the chicken and also on the inside. Wash your hands. Arrange the carrots on the bottom of the crock pot like you are making an edible trivet. Then add the onions as additional perches. Place the bird on top of the vegetables and make sure the lid sits comfortably on top of the crock pot. If the lid doesn't sit flat, adjust the veggies under the bird until it fits better. Be cautious as you reconfigure the lid and the contents so that you are not contaminating the handles with raw chicken juices. Cook on low for 6-8 hours. Remove bird carefully and carve. The vegetables also make a delicious side dish!

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# Crock Pot Mississippi Pot Roast



Soft, tender, and full of flavor– this Mississippi pot roast may become your family's new favorite dinner!

Let me begin with a disclaimer: this is not my recipe. I don't even know who created this recipe. I found about a gazillion posts about Mississippi Pot Roast and they all call for the same stuff in the same way.

So why am I posting it here? Because I like you. And I think you like me. And if you trust my opinion on all things crock-pottery, then I wanted to try this internet sensation for myself and share it with you.

The prep work for this dinner is non-existent. Not kidding. It took longer to pose my cute little pepperoncinis for this picture, than it took to get everything in the post. (Did anyone else just think dirty thoughts when I said “cute little pepperoncinis”? No? Oh, ok. Yeah, me neither.)



So after two minutes of work, dinner is ready for tonight. The raving reviews are ALL true, this dish might just be the newest family favorite— to cook and eat.

Not only is it easy, but for those of you that work ALL DAY, this is a great tender meat dish that goes low and slow for 8 hours. If your crock pot switches to warm, then that’s even better for you commuters. You got this. A real dinner that won’t be overcooked or dry when you get home. I know... promises, promises. But it’s true!



Just a few simple ingredients will turn this meat from bland to WOW!

My family ate well, enjoyed the soft, tender pot roast, and didn’t even ask for ketchup. Come on, people! You know that means it had crazy delicious flavor if my seven year old didn’t cover it in red goo! Enjoy. ☐

(Note: You can opt to only use half of the packet of au jus gravy mix if you want to cut down on salt. It will still taste great!)

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## Crock Pot Mississippi Pot Roast

Serves 6-8

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 8 hours

2-3 lb pot roast

1 packet Ranch Dip (1 oz dried mix)

1 packet Au Jus Gravy Mix (0.6 oz dried mix)

1 stick butter

6 whole pepperoncini peppers, no added juice

Put the pot roast in the bottom of the crock pot. Shake dried mixes out on top of meat. Place stick of butter in middle of roast, then surround with pepperoncini. DO NOT ADD WATER. Cook on low for 8 hours. Shred or slice to serve, as sandwiches or with pasta, rice, or potatoes.

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# Dinner Is A Crock: The Kitchen Renovation



Thank you for following my kitchen renovation, week by week! If you started following from the beginning, you might remember my boring almond and oak colored kitchen. Actually, you probably don't. I hid most of it from pictures and only showed you the edges of my [Pfaltzgraff dishes](#). So we gutted it. Like, down to the subfloor. And now we've spent

the last three months rebuilding it into this beautiful, functional, spacious kitchen. Don't be fooled... it's the same square footage it was before, but the landscape is so much more welcoming and the storage is accessible and workable.

In [WEEK ONE](#), we did demolition. It was like free therapy, we took our aggressions out on every wall. While it was intimidating to start, it was actually pretty easily and required a minimal amount of tools.

In [WEEK TWO](#), we celebrated Thanksgiving by installing our hardwood floors. This was a fun challenge that required a little booze, a lot of manpower, and no guests for the holiday! And yes... I crock potted our Thanksgiving dinner.



WEEKS THREE AND FOUR were exciting because our cabinets arrived early. I was naive enough to think that meant that the kitchen would be done three weeks early. NOPE. That's not how it really works.

I was also reminded how thankful I am that my boys are good eaters. This whole process included meticulous meal planning and a balance between crock pot cooking, fresh produce, and easy microwave foods. Not everything was healthy, but not every decision is life-changing... sometimes a meal just has to be filling and easy. Ramen noodles are still food, just ask any college student!

I would be happy to forget about WEEK FIVE. I shared with you my meals each night in hopes that we could all forget about that horrible incident with that undesirable creature. Pretty sure I'm going to have nightmares again now, thanks to myself.



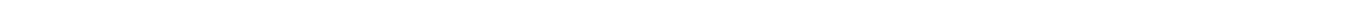
A lot of progress happened quickly in WEEKS SIX THROUGH EIGHT, but then it came to a halt. Cabinets were installed, electric was run, plumbing was prepped and then countertops were measured. And then because the quartz needed cut, we had to update and wait.

I tried to be patient, I really did. But caffeine sometimes prevents that virtue from shining! I was anxiously waiting for the install, and every day of waiting seemed like a thorn, but ultimately it really wasn't an extended time at all.

WEEK NINE was the culmination of everything. Except for one day of snow that slowed our progress, this week was crazy! Electric. Plumbing. Tile. Countertops. HVAC. Paint. [Amazon Prime delivery!](#) Oh my! My dream kitchen became a reality. Like, legit reality. I can cook and clean and start creating again— new recipes, new posts, new video, and even new cooking classes (*locally only, but please reach out if you are interested in having me as a guest speaker!*).



Thanks so much for your support in this new adventure! Let me help you save time and cook slower.



# Crock Pot Apple Butter Pork



Fork-tender meat and an amazing balance of flavor will leave everyone in your family asking for seconds!

I won't lie, tonight's dinner was fantastic. The perfect mix of textures and flavors. It was easy to make and quick to serve and might become a top 10 favorite very soon. I wasn't even offended when my kids put ketchup on the meat, because hey- they were on their second servings and not complaining!

I'm a big fan of pork country ribs but I feel like it's a complete misnomer. When I think about ribs, I think about meat falling off of a bone. But there isn't a bone in country ribs, it's just sections of meat cut into the shape of ribs and contains a wonderful balance of meat and fat (it tends to cook off, so stop worrying). These are great for pulled pork sandwiches too, for future reference.

When you put all of these ingredients in the crock pot, you might worry about not seeing enough liquid- do not add any! The meat and the apples will ooze with flavor and moisture and



it will all work out just fine. My apologies for using "ooze" to describe cooking, but when I think about cooking low and slow, it's totally an ooze, not a rush of flavor. Ooooooze.

This is a great recipe for any time of year, but especially great in the fall if you can get fresh, local apples and make your own apple butter. But there is no shame in buying it pre-made and ready to go... the outcome will be very similar!

## Crock Pot Apple Butter Pork

Serves 8

2 lbs country ribs

2 gala apples, cut off the core and then into thick slices

1 sweet onion, cut into half and then into slices

1/2 cup chunky apple butter (chunky apple sauce will work too but the seasonings won't be as intense)

4 sprigs of fresh thyme

Put meat in the bottom of crock pot, then layer the rest of the flavors. Cook on high 3-4 hours. Meat will be fork-tender and apples and onions should be soft, maybe a little mushy, but not disintegrating. It's good if the leaves fall off the thyme- please do not ingest the twigs. Enjoy!