

2017 GOALS

- ✔ **BUY INSTANT POT**
- ✔ **LEARN INSTANT POT**
- ✔ **MAKE ALL THE FOODS**

Thanks for signing up, friend! Since you've already come this far, I'm just going to assume that you made the plunge and **FINALLY** got that Instant Pot that you've been dreaming of since your neighbor brought you some of her creamy dreamy IP yogurt or those melt in your mouth pork carnitas.

I'm also going to go ahead and assume that you're 83% terrified of the Instant Pot and that it's still sitting in the hot pink and black box on your table. You're dying to become an IP master, but now that you're staring at all the buttons and cook times and manual instructions, you're starting to second guess yourself.

Guess what? It's going to be okay!! You're going to be **OKAY!** I'm here for you. The next few pages should be more than enough to get you going so that you can start to make **ALL THE FOODS** (see 2017 goal #3 above).

THE BASICS

ASSEMBLE INSTANT POT

LOCK/UNLOCK LID

COOK WATER

Today's the day! You just unboxed your Instant Pot and now you're looking at it wondering where to even start with the thing. Well, to start, unwrap everything and assemble any of the small parts that aren't yet connected. Take a quick look through the factory manual to make sure you have all of the parts and they all seem to be in good working condition.

Now, find a good spot for your Instant Pot. This should be next to a plugin on a hard surface, making sure that it's not beneath any cupboards for when you release the pressure. It could eventually peel paint or varnish from your cabinets, so we want to be sure the area above the pot is clear.

Great! Now, practice locking and unlocking the lid a few times. To do so, grasp the handle, turn counter clockwise, and lift straight up. You'll feel a bit of a catch and resistance as you turn counter-clockwise, but that's normal! Now, reverse the motion to place the lid back on.

Finally, let's do a test run. Pour 2 cups of water into your Instant Pot, placed inside the cooker base. Secure/lock the lid into place, make sure the steam release knob is in the sealing position and set to high pressure for 1 minute. Depending which IP model you have, it will start preheating automatically after 10 seconds. Once pressure is reached, it will count down from 1 minute then beep and automatically switch to the Keep Warm function. To do a quick release, carefully (with a long utensil or oven mitt) switch the steam release knob to vent, wait for all pressure to escape and the float valve to drop, then carefully open the lid, taking care to direct the steam away from your face.

That's it! You're ready to start cooking! Let's get to the fun part!

OATMEAL

SKILLS LEARNED



high pressure



natural release



multigrain function



1 cup steel cut oats
2 cups water
1 cup milk
½ cup pumpkin puree
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
Pinch of salt
Pinch of black pepper
¼ cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons vanilla
½ cup strong coffee
¼ cup half and half or heavy cream

Combine oats, water, and milk in your pressure cooker and set to high pressure for 12 minutes.

When time is up, let the pressure naturally release for 10 minutes, then release any remaining pressure.

Stir in pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice, salt, pepper, brown sugar, vanilla, and coffee.

Ladle into a bowl or mug, top with some extra brown sugar and a drizzle of heavy cream. Eat!

I always encourage everyone to start by making some steel cut oats in your pressure cooker. They're very forgiving, if you get the time wrong, you can always re-lock the lid and cook for a few more minutes, and there's nothing better than a nice big warm bowl of oats in the morning!

In this recipe, you'll be using the high pressure function, which is the case for the majority of pressure cooker (PC) recipes. If you have an Instant Pot, all you need to do is push the multigrain button, cycle through to "less", then adjust the time down to 12 minutes.

After the 12 minutes counts down and your Instant Pot beeps at you signaling the end, don't do anything. Let your IP sit there undisturbed for another 10 minutes, then switch the steam release knob to the venting position. This will release any remaining pressure that was not released during the 10 minute natural release period. In the future, if a recipe calls for a full natural release, you will let your IP sit there undisturbed for as long as it takes for the float valve to drop. The amount of time will depend on the amount of food in the pressure cooker.

MAC & CHEESE

SKILLS LEARNED



sauté function



quick release



mastering pasta



½ lb mild italian sausage
¼ cup finely chopped sundried tomatoes
2 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon salt, divided
16 oz whole wheat elbow macaroni
4 cups warm water
1 15oz can evaporated milk
1 15oz can pumpkin puree
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
2 cups chopped spinach

Sauté sausage in pressure cooker, crumbling as you go, until cooked all the way through. Add sundried tomatoes, butter, crushed red pepper, cayenne, and 2 teaspoons salt. Stir. Turn pressure cooker off and add macaroni and warm water. Stir, then lock lid and set to high pressure for 5 minutes.

When time is up, do a quick release and add evaporated milk, pumpkin puree, and remaining teaspoon of salt.

Stir until mixture starts to thicken. Sprinkle in both cheeses and stir until cheese is all melted and coating the noodles.

Add spinach, stir until wilted, then serve!

Many people think when that purchase their Instant Pot that it's only a pressure cooker. Goodness gracious no! Half the time I just use mine to quick sauté up a few ingredients, even if I won't be using my IP for the main recipe. For this macaroni and cheese recipe, you're going to be using the sauté more and sauté less function.

To brown the sausage, press the sauté button and cycle through until "more" appears on the screen. This will brown the sausage in no time! Follow the rest of the directions, set to high pressure for 5 minutes and then when time is up do a quick release! In the last lesson we learned how to naturally release, but you might still not be sure about a quick release. A quick release is exactly what it sounds like. When your Instant Pot beeps, signaling the end of the recipe's cook time, you're going to carefully flip that steam valve to the venting position immediately. The pressure is going to come barreling out, but no need to be nervous! This is exactly what you want! When the float valve drops, you can unlock the lid.

**One tip for you - whenever making a pasta dish, always use whole wheat pasta when possible. It will hold its shape so much better than regular pasta!

LAVA CAKES

SKILLS LEARNED

- ✓ using the trivet
- ✓ mastering baked goods
- ✓ dish removal techniques



1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup butter
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 eggs
1/4 cup all purpose flour
1/2 cup powdered sugar

In the microwave or over a double boiler, melt chocolate chips and butter together until smooth. This will take 1-2 minutes in the microwave, stirring every 15-20 seconds, or 3-4 minutes over a double boiler.

Let cool very slightly and whisk in vanilla and eggs.

Lastly, stir in flour and sugar until completely smooth.

Grease the inside of 4 small, heat-safe ramekins with canola spray or butter.

Evenly distribute chocolate batter into ramekins.

Pour 1 1/2 cups of water into pressure cooker and then place trivet inside.

Put ramekins on top of trivet inside of pressure cooker, lock lid, and set to high pressure for 6 minutes.

When time is up, do a quick release, carefully remove ramekins with a pot holder or dish cloth, and tip upside down onto a small plate. Cover with whipped cream or ice cream and enjoy!

If you're anything like me, these lava cakes will soon be at the top of your list for easy desserts when company is coming. To many's surprise, there are quite a few baked goods and desserts that translate quite well to the Instant Pot way of cooking. It creates a perfectly moist environment for luscious cakes, cheesecakes, muffins, coffeecake, and anything else that doesn't require a crisp top or bottom.

You will be using the trivet that came with your Instant Pot for this recipe. First pour 1 cup of water into the bottom of your pot (it's always essential to have a cup of liquid if you're doing any pressure cooking) then place your trivet into the water.

If you are using small ramekins, you should be able to get them out using a dishtowel or a pot holder. If you are making other baked goods that take up more space in the Instant Pot, like a cheesecake, I recommend fashioning a long sling out of foil, placing your pan onto the sling, and then lowering it down onto the trivet. This way you'll be able to remove the hot dish after your food is done cooking.

MEATBALLS

SKILLS LEARNED



browning meat



cooking times for meat



trivet vs. no trivet



Meatballs

1 lb ground chicken
½ cup panko breadcrumbs
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 egg
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon black pepper
2 teaspoons salt
¼ cup minced fresh basil

Pancetta mixture

4 ounces diced pancetta
1 small white onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon dried rosemary
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 cup halved cherry tomatoes

Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl, then form into 2 inch meatballs using your hands.

Place meatballs in the freezer for 15-20 minutes if mixture is too sticky to hold it's shape.

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in the pressure cooker on the browning or sauté setting and cook meatballs for 1 minute on 2 of the sides until you have a nice brown crust.

Place meatballs on top of trivet inside pressure cooker, then add 1 cup of water to bottom of pot.

Lock lid and set to high pressure for 5 minutes. When time is up, let pressure naturally release for 10 minutes then release any remaining pressure using a quick release.

While meatballs are cooking, sauté pancetta in large skillet until it starts to crisp.

Add onions and cook for another 5-6 minutes.

Add garlic, thyme, rosemary, pepper, and cherry tomatoes and sauté for 2-3 minutes.

Add cooked meatballs to pancetta mixture, stir to coat, then serve warm!

Meatballs have to be one of the greatest quick dinners that can be made in the Instant Pot. You have minimal mess, no scraping burnt bits off of your cookie sheet, and the juiciest meatballs known to man!

As you'll see in the instructions, you will need to brown the meatballs before pressure cooking them. This step is not mandatory, but if you like a little bit of crust on the outside of your meatball, I highly recommend doing so. To brown your meatballs as well as any other meat, press the sauté button then cycle until the screen says more. Add a little bit of oil, wait until the display says HOT, then add meatballs. For these, you'll need to brown them just 1-2 minutes per side, but with larger cuts of meat like roast or a pork shoulder, I recommend 3-4 minutes per side.

The cook time for all meat varies, so until you get comfortable knowing all the times, I recommend using google to search for the perfect cook times. You'll start to see a pattern after awhile, but there's no shame in looking it up when you're just getting started.

You'll see I use a trivet for cooking these meatballs, but if you make another recipe like my chicken tortilla soup, you'll see that no trivet is used. Anytime I'm cooking a dish where the liquid will be consumed at the end (is part of the dish), I cook the meat right in the liquid. If the liquid is added just to provide moisture (and since it is needed for the Instant Pot to come to pressure), I use my trivet and set the meat right on top.

KITSCHEN CAT
cook with confidence. eat with joy.

SHREDDED CHICKEN

SKILLS LEARNED

- ✓ poultry cooking times
- ✓ quick vs. natural for meat
- ✓ shredding tips



2 lbs boneless skinless frozen chicken breasts
1 large onion, chopped
1½ cups of your favorite bbq sauce, divided
½ cup zesty italian dressing
¼ cup light brown sugar

In pressure cooker, whisk together onion, 1 cup bbq sauce, italian dressing, and brown sugar.

Add frozen chicken breasts, lock lid, and set to high pressure for 12 minutes.

When time is up, let pressure naturally release for 10 minutes, then release any remaining pressure.

Remove chicken from pot, shred using two forks, then add remaining ½ cup of bbq sauce. Serve or freeze for later!

When making chicken, cook times are going to differ depending on what cut of chicken you're making. For thawed breasts, I usually do 8 minutes plus a 10 minute natural release and for frozen breasts, it's 12 minutes plus a 10 minute natural release. If you're making thighs or legs, 9 minutes plus a 10 minute natural release is usually a standard cook time.

For most large cuts of meat, you will be using a natural release. Just think of it as the rest time after grilling a steak or taking a turkey out of the oven. It needs a little time to hang out so it doesn't lose all of its juiciness and moisture. The same is true for these chicken breasts. If you were to do a quick release, the chicken would seize up and be more tough than if you let your Instant Pot slowly lose pressure.

If I'm cooking a large amount of chicken to shred and then freeze, I like to save a few minutes by throwing my cooked chicken breasts in the stand mixer, then using the paddle or dough hook attachment to quickly shred the chicken. It works like a dream!



GOALS ACCOMPLISHED!

You did it! You're an Instant Pot PRO now! I'd guess that about 90% of the recipes you'll be making from here on out use the techniques that you learned in the last few pages. As promised in the beginning, it really isn't a hard appliance to master once you have a few tools and tips to get you started.

If you have any questions about your Instant Pot, a specific recipe, or would just like to say hi, shoot me an email at hello@kitschencat.com!

If you're not yet following me on social media, you can find me at Kitschen Cat on Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook. I'd love to chat with you about your latest Instant Pot creations!

Sincerely,

Jessie (Kitschen Cat)