

# PRESSURE COOKER COOKING TIMES

## FRESH VEGETABLES

Wash and peel vegetables as if you were cooking them by any of the traditional methods. Vegetables cook very fast in a pressure cooker; they're usually cooked on the highest pressure. The times given in the chart are only a guide; the cooking time depends on the age of the vegetable, how it has been stored, the size and how the vegetable is chopped. There is a slight difference in cooking times between steaming vegetables over the water in the cooker and cooking them in the water in the cooker; whichever method you choose, it's always better to undercook vegetables; it's easy to add a little more cooking time at the end. Once vegetables are ready, the cooking needs to be stopped immediately. This is done by releasing the pressure on the cooker. Frozen vegetables need a little longer than the times suggested in the chart, but only half a minute or so.

## MEAT AND CHICKEN

Meat and chicken are usually cooked on the highest pressure and are definitely better in flavour and colour if the meat is browned before pressure cooking. The chart is only a guide, as the time taken for meat to cook depends on many factors, such as the age and tenderness of the cut, the temperature of the meat before it goes into the cooker and the size, thickness and weight of the piece or pieces of meat. Don't waste money on expensive cuts of meat for the pressure cooker, as they will dry out and be bland in flavour; use the cheaper secondary cuts for the best results. Chicken is easily overcooked in the pressure cooker, especially the boneless fillets.

## RICE AND OTHER GRAINS

Rice and other grains can be successfully cooked in a pressure cooker. As a guide, you need triple the water to the grain – that is, allow 3 cups of water to each 1 cup of grains. Drain away the excess water quickly after the grains are cooked.

- Grains such as barley and brown rice are cooked using high pressure, followed by a slow release of pressure – which really means the grains are being cooked more during this release time – followed by a quick release of pressure, this is to stop the cooking.
- Short rice, such as arborio, is usually cooked using high pressure, then the quick release of pressure to stop the rice overcooking.
- White rice, including medium and long grain, basmati and jasmine, is cooked using high pressure, then slow release of pressure, followed by a quick release of pressure.

All grains need a little butter or oil to stop them foaming during the pressure cooking process; about 1 tablespoon of either, for each cup of grain. All grains along with the water should only half-fill the pressure cooker. Remember rice and most grains go very close to tripling in bulk by the time they're cooked. Season grains with salt before cooking if you like. The chart is a guide only to cooking times for grains. These times are total cooking times, including the initial time under high pressure and the slow and/or quick release of pressure times.

## PULSES

Pulses include all dried beans, peas and lentils. Lentils don't need soaking at all, just washing and draining well like all the other pulses before cooking. Soaking pulses before pressure cooking will reduce the cooking time by 5 to 10 minutes depending on the variety of pulse. Remember that all pulses are dried, so they're going to expand during cooking. Keep this in mind when you're deciding on the quantity to cook; don't over fill the pressure cooker.

As a guide, only one-third fill the pressure cooker with pulses and water. Don't add salt to the pulses, the salt prevents them from becoming tender. Add 1 teaspoon of butter or vegetable oil for every half cup of pulses; the butter or oil will prevent the mixture from foaming during the cooking time. Pulses are cooked using the highest pressure, and are usually allowed to stand until the pressure releases naturally from the cooker.

The chart is only a guide to cooking times; the age and the moisture content of the pulses will determine just how tender the pulses will be after cooking. Pulses appear to store for long periods of time, but in fact are drying out. It's best to buy small quantities often, store them in the fridge, or even better, soak them overnight, drain, and freeze them in portion sizes ready to pressure cook. The cooking times in the chart are for pulses which have NOT been soaked overnight.

# COOKING TIMES CHART

FRESH VEGETABLES	MINUTES
Artichokes (globe) whole	15
Asparagus	2
Aubergine	2
Beans (green)	6
Beetroot	20
Broad beans	5
Broccoli	2
Brussels sprouts	7
Cabbage	4
Carrot	4
Cauliflower	2
Corn	1
Courgette	1
Fennel	13
Leek	2
Okra	10
Parsnip	2
Peas	2
Potato (quarters)	10
Pumpkin	8
Turnip	5

RICE AND OTHER GRAINS	MINUTES
Arborio rice	6
Barley	20
Brown rice	20
White rice	10

MEAT AND CHICKEN	MINUTES
Beef (chopped coarsely)	10
Chicken (whole 1.5 kg)	20
Chicken pieces (with bone)	10
Chicken fillets (without bone)	5
Lamb shanks	25
Lamb (chopped coarsely)	20
Pork (chopped coarsely)	10
Pork ribs (short)	20
Veal (chopped coarsely)	10

PULSES	MINUTES
Black beans	30
Borlotti beans	30
Butter beans	40
Chickpeas	45
Lentils	8
Red kidney beans	30
Soya beans	35
Split peas	20
White beans	30

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