

CHICKEN BONE BROTH

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Bone Broth

Homemade bone broth isn't just delicious, it's wellness in a bowl.

Making broth is not rocket science, but it does take planning and the best ingredients you can find.

The better your ingredients, the more nutritious your broth will be. Pastured and organic chickens also mean you can avoid the chemicals and subclinical antibiotics usually associated with confinement poultry production.

Cooking Methods

1. 10-12 hours at a very low simmer on your stove, or
2. 60 minutes in a pressure cooker

Because of the extensive cooking times in #1, it's critical to keep the broth to a very low simmer throughout the cooking time.

Note - I don't recommend slow cookers because most fail to maintain a low simmer, and boil instead. That prolonged boiling can degrade taste and nutrition. See *Cook's Illustrated* magazine for slow cooker reviews.



Basic Recipe

For a foundational broth

- 3-4 quarts cold water
- 1 whole chicken (3-4 lb.), or a couple of chicken carcasses from earlier meals
- 2 large carrots, quartered
- 2 medium onions halved, root ends cut off, peels left on
- 2 celery ribs, cut in four
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 T vinegar or 1/4 c white wine
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp sea salt

Instructions - Stove top stock pot

1. If using a whole chicken, cut into pieces, and cut through some of the larger bones. Be sure to use every part, including neck, back and wing tips, heart and giblets.
2. Place the chicken, and the rest of the ingredients into a large stock pot.

Pressure Cookers

When I bought my first pressure cooker several years ago, I found just three books to help me explore this cooking method. Today, there seems to be a new cookbook published every other month. And then there are the websites and blogs devoted to pressure cooking. Time-savers with nutritional benefits!

While the appliances of yesteryear were usually aluminum and a bit intimidating, today's models are stainless steel, designed for safety, and feature lift-out pot inserts.

Tip: Look for stainless steel inserts.

There are two types of pressure cookers: stovetop and electric. I own and use *both* all the time.

The stovetop appliance is easy to use, but requires monitoring to make sure the heat under the cooker is just high enough to keep the device at pressure. Stove top pots reach cooking pressure and cool down more quickly than the electronic models.

Tip: Never fill a pot more than 2/3 full.

3. Add up to 4 quarts cold water, making sure the bones are just covered. Add additional water to make sure bones and meat are covered.
4. Bring to a boil over medium high heat, then reduce the heat and allow to cook at a very low simmer for 10-12 hours.
5. Skim any frothy scum that collects on the surface during the first hour or so.
6. Check the pot frequently to make sure the simmer is kept low.
7. Add water, if needed, to keep the vegetables and meat submerged.
8. Once the broth is done, allow to cool for an hour so that it's safe to handle.
9. Carefully lift out the larger vegetables, bones and pieces of meat.
10. Strain the broth through a strainer or a cheesecloth-lined colander to remove all solids.
11. Use the broth immediately or freeze.
12. Or, defat the broth, and simmer to reduce it to one-half of its volume, and then freeze.
 - To defat, place your cooled down pot of broth in your refrigerator over night. The next day, you'll be able to lift or spoon out the layer of chicken fat that has solidified on the surface of the broth.
 - You can store this fat separately for sautéing vegetables, eggs, and reheating meats.
13. You can freeze the defatted broth immediately, or return it to a simmer until it's reduced to one-half its volume. This can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Watch closely to prevent boil-off!
14. You can freeze this concentrated broth in jars or ice cube trays. Once the broth is frozen, pop out the cubes and store them in plastic bags in the freezer.





On the other hand, electronic cookers are often programmable, multi-function appliances that can be used as rice cookers, steamers, yogurt makers, and slow cookers. For most recipes, you can safely set the time and walk away.



Instructions - Pressure Cooker* - Stove top

1. Assemble the same list of ingredients listed for the stove top stock pot.
2. Use about 3 quarts water, or enough to fill the pot 2/3 full. Do not exceed the **maximum** level line indicated on the inside of the pot.
3. Lock your lid into place.
4. Increase the heat under the pot to high and bring the pot to pressure. This is usually indicated by a pop-up button on the lid. (See your manufacturer's instructions.)
5. Once the pot has reached pressure:
 - Begin timing the cooking time, and
 - Reduce the heat under the pot enough so that pressure is maintained.
6. Keep the pot under high pressure for 60 minutes.
7. Turn off heat.
8. Use a "quick release" of pressure. **See your manufacturer's instructions.**
9. Open the lid so that the **steam faces away from you.**
10. Follow steps 10-14 from previous recipe.

Instructions - Electric Pressure Cooker*

1. Follow steps 1 and 2, above.
2. Lock the lid in place.
3. Follow manufacturer's instructions to bring the pot up to pressure, and cook at pressure for 60 minutes.
4. Release pressure using a quick-release method, as instructed in your **user's manual.**
5. Follow steps 10-14 from "Stove top stock pot" recipe.

** The meat-to-water ratios are for 8-quart pressure cookers. Reduce both meat and water proportionally for 6-quart pots. Take care not to fill the cooker more than 2/3 full.*