



DUTCH OVEN DINNERS

Low-and-slow, feed-a-crowd one-pot meals. Set it in the coals and let it work.

Recipes that work when your phone doesn't.

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Dutch Oven Beef Stew (Camp or Kitchen)

Prep 20 min · Cook 2 hr · Serves 6

Classic Dutch oven beef stew: tender beef, carrots, potatoes in rich broth, cooked over campfire coals or in your oven — no acid, so cast iron loves it.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs beef stew meat (chuck), cut in 1.5-inch cubes
- 1/3 cup flour, with salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 carrots, cut in chunks
- 1.5 lbs potatoes, cut in chunks
- 2 stalks celery, sliced (optional)
- 4 cups beef broth
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 bay leaf, 1 tsp dried thyme

METHOD

- 1 Toss the beef cubes in the seasoned flour to coat (save any leftover flour — it helps thicken later).
- 2 Heat the oil in the Dutch oven and brown the beef in batches, getting a deep crust. Don't crowd the pot. Set the beef aside.
- 3 Add the onion and cook until soft, then the garlic for a minute. Stir in any leftover flour.
- 4 Return the beef, then add the broth, Worcestershire, bay leaf, thyme, carrots, potatoes, and celery. Stir and bring to a low simmer.
- 5 Cook low and slow until the beef is fork-tender, about 1.5 to 2 hours. CAMP: lid on, nestled in coals with a few on the lid (see our temperature guide). KITCHEN: covered, in a 325°F oven.
- 6 If you want it thicker, stir in a tablespoon of cornstarch mixed with cold water and simmer a few minutes. Remove the bay leaf, season, and serve.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/dutch-oven-beef-stew

Dutch Oven Camp Chili

Prep 15 min · Cook 1 hr · Serves 6

Dutch oven chili over the campfire: brown the meat, build the pot, and simmer low into a thick, smoky bowl. The cast-iron camp dinner that feeds a crowd.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (15 oz) kidney beans, drained
- 1 can (15 oz) pinto beans, drained
- 1 can (28 oz) diced tomatoes
- 1 can (15 oz) tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp salt (more to taste)
- Cheese, onions, and cornbread, to serve

METHOD

- 1 If you're cooking in cast iron, drop a foil liner in first (or use an enameled or old beater pot). This keeps the acidic tomatoes off the bare metal.
- 2 Over the coals, brown the ground beef with the onion, breaking it up as it cooks. Add the garlic for the last minute, then drain off the fat.
- 3 Add the beans, diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, and all the spices. Stir to combine.
- 4 Simmer at the edge of the coals, stirring now and then, for 45 minutes to an hour — longer is fine and only makes it better. Add a splash of water if it gets too thick.
- 5 Taste and adjust the salt and chili powder, then serve with cheese, raw onion, and cornbread.
- 6 Don't store leftover chili in a bare cast-iron pot overnight — move it to a sealed container so the acid doesn't sit on the metal.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/dutch-oven-camp-chili

Dutch Oven Chicken Pot Pie (Camp Comfort Food)

Prep 15 min · Cook 30 min · Serves 6

Dutch oven chicken pot pie at camp — cooked chicken, veggies, and creamy gravy under golden biscuits, baked in the coals. Comfort food, mostly shortcuts.

INGREDIENTS

- 2–3 cups cooked chicken, shredded or diced (rotisserie or canned)
- 1 bag (12 oz) frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 cans (10.5 oz) cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 can refrigerated biscuits (or a pie crust)
- 2 tbsp butter
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

- 1 Line or lightly grease the Dutch oven. Stir together the chicken, frozen vegetables, soup, milk, butter, and a little salt and pepper right in the pot.
- 2 Set it over the coals to heat through and start bubbling, stirring once or twice, about 10 minutes.
- 3 Lay the biscuits (or crust) over the top in a single layer.
- 4 Cover and bake with coals on the lid and only a few underneath — top-heavy heat browns the biscuits without scorching the bottom ([coal counts])(/field-notes/dutch-oven-temperature-charcoal-briquettes)). Bake about 20–25 minutes, until golden and cooked through.
- 5 Let it stand a few minutes, then spoon up biscuit-and-filling together.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/dutch-oven-chicken-pot-pie

Dutch Oven Shepherd's Pie (Camp Shortcut)

Prep 10 min · Cook 30 min · Serves 6

Easy camp shepherd's pie: brown ground beef, add frozen veggies and gravy, top with store-bought mashed potatoes, and bake it bubbling in the Dutch oven.

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 lbs ground beef
- 1 bag (12–16 oz) frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 jar or packet of beef gravy
- 1 tub (24 oz) prepared mashed potatoes (or instant)
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup shredded cheese (optional)

METHOD

- 1 Brown the ground beef in a Dutch oven (or deep skillet) over the coals, breaking it up as it cooks. Season with salt and pepper, then drain the fat.
- 2 Stir in the frozen mixed vegetables and the gravy. Simmer a few minutes until the veggies are heated through and everything's coated. Level it off.
- 3 Spread the mashed potatoes evenly over the top, right to the edges. Scatter on the cheese if you're using it.
- 4 Put the lid on. For a Dutch oven, set it over a few coals and place several coals on the lid so it heats top and bottom. Cook 15 to 20 minutes until hot through and bubbling at the edges.
- 5 Let it sit a couple of minutes, then scoop straight from the pot.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/camp-shepherds-pie

Dutch Oven Stuffed Peppers (or Foil Packets)

Prep 15 min · Cook 40 min · Serves 4

Stuffed peppers at camp — in the Dutch oven or wrapped in foil on the coals. Peppers, seasoned beef, rice, and cheese, filling mostly done at home.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large bell peppers, tops cut off and seeded
- 1 lb ground beef or turkey, cooked
- 1.5 cups cooked rice
- 1 can (15 oz) tomato sauce or diced tomatoes
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 tbsp taco or Italian seasoning
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Oil, for the pot
- Heavy-duty foil (foil method)

METHOD

- 1 At home: brown the beef with the onion and seasoning, stir in the cooked rice and about half the tomato sauce, and chill it. That is the whole job done before you leave.
- 2 At camp, stuff the peppers with the filling and top each with the rest of the sauce.

- 3 Dutch oven method: oil the bottom, stand the peppers up inside, cover, and cook with coals on the lid and underneath ([coal counts here](/field-notes/dutch-oven-temperature-charcoal-briquettes)) until the peppers are tender, about 35–45 minutes.
- 4 Foil method: wrap each stuffed pepper in heavy-duty foil, set on a bed of coals, and cook about 30–35 minutes, turning once, until tender — same idea as our [foil-packet dinners](/field-notes/how-to-cook-foil-packet-meals).
- 5 Add the shredded cheese for the last 5 minutes so it melts. Open foil packets carefully — the steam is hot.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/dutch-oven-stuffed-peppers

Easy Chuck Wagon Stew (One-Pot Cowboy Dinner)

Prep 15 min · Cook 40 min · Serves 8

Easy chuck wagon stew: brown the beef, dump in beans, potatoes, corn, and tomatoes, and simmer one pot into a hearty cowboy dinner that feeds a crowd.

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 lbs ground beef (or half beef, half sliced smoked sausage)
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 can (15 oz) pinto or ranch-style beans
- 1 can (15 oz) baked beans
- 2 cups diced potatoes (or 1 can, drained)
- 1 can (15 oz) corn, drained
- 1 can (15 oz) diced tomatoes — or skip them for a brothy version (see below)
- 2 cups beef broth
- 1 tbsp chili powder, 1 tsp cumin, salt and pepper

METHOD

- 1 If you're cooking in cast iron, drop in a foil liner or use an old/enameled pot — this one's tomato-based and simmers a while (see the note below).
- 2 Brown the ground beef (and sausage, if using) with the onion over the coals, breaking it up. Drain the fat.
- 3 Add everything else — both cans of beans, potatoes, corn, tomatoes, broth, and the spices. Stir to combine.
- 4 Simmer at the edge of the coals, stirring now and then, about 30–40 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and it's thickened. Add a splash of broth or water if it gets too thick.

5 Taste, adjust the salt, and serve in bowls with bread or crackers.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/chuck-wagon-stew

Bean Hole Beans (Slow-Cooked in the Coals)

Prep 30 min · Cook 8 hr · Serves 8

Dutch oven baked beans, camp style: smoky, slow-cooked beans in cast iron — a modern take on the traditional Scout bean hole beans. Make-ahead friendly.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb dried navy or Great Northern beans
- 1/2 lb salt pork or thick-cut bacon, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- Water, to cover

METHOD

- 1** The night before: soak the dried beans in plenty of water overnight.
- 2** In the morning: drain, cover with fresh water, and parboil for 30 to 60 minutes until the beans are just tender but not falling apart. Drain, saving the cooking water.
- 3** Layer the beans, salt pork, and onion in a cast-iron Dutch oven. Mix the molasses, brown sugar, mustard, salt, and pepper into a couple cups of the hot bean water and pour it over until the beans are just covered. Put the lid on.
- 4** The traditional way: dig a hole, line it with a bed of hot coals, lower in the lidded pot, pack more coals around and over it, then bury the whole thing with dirt. Leave it 6 to 8 hours.
- 5** The easy way: nestle the lidded Dutch oven into banked coals at the edge of your fire, low and slow, for 6 to 8 hours. Check it every couple hours and add a little water if it looks dry.
- 6** Dig it out (or pull it off) at dinner. Save what's left — reheated with eggs, bean hole beans are breakfast the next morning.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/bean-hole-beans

Dutch Oven Biscuits and Gravy (One-Pot Camp Dinner)

Prep 10 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 6

Dutch oven biscuits and gravy, made for dinner: peppery sausage gravy with biscuit dough baked right on top, all in one pot over the coals.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb bulk breakfast sausage
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 to 4 cups milk
- Plenty of black pepper, plus salt to taste
- 1 can refrigerated biscuits (or your own biscuit dough)

METHOD

- 1 Brown the sausage in the Dutch oven over the coals, breaking it up as it cooks. Don't drain it — the fat is what makes the gravy.
- 2 Sprinkle the flour over the sausage, stir to coat, and cook for a minute. Slowly stir in the milk and let it simmer, stirring, until it thickens into gravy. Season hard with black pepper and salt.
- 3 Lay the biscuit dough rounds right on top of the gravy, spaced apart so they have room to puff.
- 4 Put the lid on, bank a ring of coals underneath and a few more on the lid, and bake 15-20 minutes until the biscuits are golden and cooked through and the gravy is bubbling. Spoon up biscuit and gravy together.

Full recipe & tips: dragonflysupply.com/recipes/dutch-oven-biscuits-and-gravy

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From one camping family to another. Written by Brian Diamond — former Cubmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster, decades of real family camping with an Eagle Scout son.

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