

Cook Up Some Energy Savings

Oven cooking is more economical than surface cooking. When you have both a large and a small oven, use the small one whenever possible. Use these tips for efficient oven cooking:

- Save time and energy by using one oven to prepare the entire meal. A pie or cake can go into the oven as a main dish is removed.
- Warming foods, plates and platters with the oven's stored heat after baking, requires no energy. If the food must be kept warm for an extended period of time, set the oven no higher than 140° to 200°. A food warmer built into a range usually requires less energy than an oven or surface unit when keeping food heated.
- Consider using a microwave oven, small portable electric frying pan, grill, or toaster/broiler instead of the oven. These small appliances use about 1/3 the power of an oven broiler.
- Cook by time and temperature. Precise timing eliminates repeated opening of the oven door to check on cooking progress. Each time the door is opened, the temperature drops 25° to 50°.

Cooking on the range uses energy continuously so it's important to follow these energy-saving tips:

- Choose pots and pans that evenly cover the heating elements. Use pans with flat bottoms, straight sides and tight-fitting lids that hold heat and permit lower settings.
- Use a slow-cooker or crockpot to cook stews and other single-dish meals. You'll save energy, time and effort.
- When cooking fresh or frozen vegetables, use only enough water to produce steam and prevent sticking. Reduce to simmer and cover tightly so vegetables retain vitamins and minerals — and taste better, too.

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