# Slow Cooker Meal Prep

This playbook describes the steps involved in preparing and cooking a meal using a slow cooker. The process allows for a hands-off approach to create delicious and comforting dishes with minimal effort.

### Step 1: Ingredient Prep

Gather all necessary ingredients as listed in the slow cooker recipe. Prepare the ingredients by washing, chopping, slicing or measuring as needed to ensure they are ready to be used.

### Step 2: Layering

Layer the ingredients in the slow cooker according to the recipe's instructions. Typically, root vegetables and tougher cuts of meat are placed at the bottom where they can cook slowly and absorb flavors.

### Step 3: Seasoning

Add spices, herbs, and other seasonings as prescribed by the recipe. Make sure to distribute them evenly for consistent flavoring throughout the dish.

### Step 4: Liquids

Pour in the required liquids such as broth, water, or sauce, ensuring that they at least partially cover the ingredients to facilitate even cooking and prevent drying out.

### Step 5: Cook Setting

Set the slow cooker to the appropriate temperature and time based on the recipe. Most slow cooker recipes have options for either a low or high setting, with low typically requiring 6-8 hours and high usually 3-4 hours cooking time.

### Step 6: Start Cooking

Place the lid securely on the slow cooker, ensuring it fits properly to maintain the correct cooking temperature and moisture levels, then start the cooking process.

### Step 7: Serving

Once the cooking time is complete, open the lid carefully to avoid steam burns. Stir the dish gently, if applicable, and serve while it's hot and flavors are most vibrant.

## General Notes

### Safety Check

Always ensure the slow cooker is functioning properly before starting your recipe. Check the electrical cord, heating base, and ceramic insert for any damage.

### Cut Size

When preparing ingredients, try to cut them into similar-sized pieces for even cooking. Larger cuts may require longer cooking times.

### Leftovers

Slow cooker dishes often yield leftovers, which can be stored in airtight containers in the refrigerator for up to three days or in the freezer for up to three months.