

# *Cooking For One Or Two*

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Revised by Lendamai Poole. 2016

# Cooking for One or Two

## Leaders Guide

### Introduction:

Dining alone does have its benefits. You can cook what you like...you can serve just as much as you want when you want it...and you always eat in good company.

Quote from "Taste of Home" magazine.

Objective of this lesson is to make good nutritious meals in smaller proportions to serve one or two or to divide and store larger meals.

This lesson can be useful to young people just leaving home, newlyweds as well as empty-nesters and seniors.

### Before the lesson:

\*Copy participant handouts.

\*Contact participants for their favorite recipe that serves 4-8 so it can be cut down at lesson time.

### Leader/Teacher

- (1) Tips on shopping, storing and cooking meals. Have open discussion for other ideas.
- (2) Cooking Ideas.
- (3) Food safety basics for quality meals.
- (4) Cutting recipes.
- (5) Emergency Substitutions
- (6) Recipes
- (7) Resources

### Participants Handouts

- (1) Shopping and storing tips
- (2) Cooking ideas
- (3) Food safety basics
- (4) Cutting recipes
- (5) Emergency Substitutions
- (6) Recipes
- (7) Resources
- (8) Evaluation sheet

Developed for Oregon FCE by: Lendamai Poole and Billie Dahl

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## Cooking for One or Two

### Participants Handout

- (1) Shopping and storing tips.
- (2) Cooking ideas
- (3) Food safety basics
- (4) Cutting recipes
- (5) Emergency substitutions
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## Cooking for One or Two

### Shopping and Storing Tips

Despite our best intentions when we shop, there are still ingredients we might end up tossing because they have gone bad before we finish using them. Here are some helpful hints.

1. Bacon : Roll up the slices into tight cylinders, place cylinders in a zip-lock bag and freeze.
2. Berries: Wash before storing. If not freezing, swish them in a solution of 3 parts water and 1 part vinegar, rinse then dry thoroughly in a salad spinner lined with paper towel. If freezing, wash, lay on a plastic covered cookie sheet and freeze. After frozen place in zip-lock bags flat so you can stack them.
3. Greens: Wash greens and dry thoroughly in salad spinner then store between paper towels or lightly roll in paper towels and store in partially open zip-lock bags in refrigerator.
4. Bread: Crusty bread, like a rustic Italian loaf, will last a few days stored cut side down on the counter. Do not store it in plastic (the moisture encourages mold) or in the refrigerator, where bread stales faster than a room temperature. For longer storage, wrap the bread tightly in aluminum foil, place in zip-lock bag, and freeze for up to one month. To serve, bake the frozen foil wrapped loaf directly on the rack of a 450 degree oven until warm and crisp, 10 to 30 minutes.
5. Butter: When stored in the fridge, even when wrapped, butter can pick up odors and turn rancid within just a few weeks. Store a pound of butter in freezer for up to four months and transfer one stick at a time to fridge as needed.
6. Cheese: Cheese is best wrapped in parchment paper and then in aluminum foil and refrigerated. The paper allows the cheese to breath, and the foil keeps out off flavors from the refrigerator and prevents the cheese from drying out. Freezing and thawing may make some cheeses, like cream cheese crumbly.
7. Chiles: Fresh Chiles like jalapenos quickly lose their flavor and crispness when left loose in the crisper drawer, but they will keep for several weeks halved then stored in a brind of 1 tablespoon of salt per cup of water; rinse before using.
8. Spice jars: Label spice jars with the date opened. Replace ground spices after one year and whole spices after 2 years.
9. Produce is usually sold in large portions like carrots by the bunch, lettuce by the head, grapes by 2 pound bag. You may have better luck in organic section where produce is often sold loose by the pound. Local farmers markets are a good place to shop.
10. Buy shrimp frozen as most fresh has been frozen already and defrosted.
11. Dry goods: Buy from bulk bins.
12. Single serving packages make it easy to use just a small amount and keep the rest sealed.
13. Substitute shallots for onions when needing a small portion of an onion. A single shallot will yield just a few tablespoons when minced. Frozen chopped onions can be used in place of fresh chopped onions in any recipe. Just chop extra onion and freeze it in a zip lock bag.

14. Make stuffing then bake in muffin tins. Freeze the leftovers individually for later use. Meat loaf can be cooked the same way.
15. When making waffles or pancakes, freeze the leftovers. Wrap each one in plastic wrap then place in freezer bag. Take out what you need and toast in toaster oven.
16. Purchase eggs by the  $\frac{1}{2}$  dozen.
17. Cookie dough can be made and frozen. Slice and bake as needed.
18. Decide whether a premium price paid for a food because it is individually packaged is worth it to you. Having on hand ready to use foods or foods that require only heating may make the difference between eating or not eating n days when you are not feeling well. Convenience purchased at the grocery store is less costly than hiring someone to prepare food in the home.



## Cooking for One or Two

### Cooking Ideas

#### Roast Revisited:

Combine undiluted cream of mushroom soup with leftover beef gravy and chopped leftover roast beef; spoon into a greased baking dish. Top with frozen or canned french fried onion rings. Cover and bake at 350 degrees until heated through.

#### Rice Rerun:

For a salad or dessert, mix leftover rice with sliced bananas and undrained crushed pineapple.

#### Twice Baked Potatoes:

Bake many potatoes. Stuff them and let them cool. Wrap them individually in plastic wrap and freeze in a plastic bag. When you wish a baked potato, take out one or two, thaw and bake.

#### Mini Meatloaf and Swedish Meatballs:

Make a mini meatloaf with half of meatloaf mixture. Shape into oval loaf. With other half of mixture make meatballs. Bake both in oven at the same time. Mix gravy and sour cream with meatballs at a latter date.

#### Refrigerator rolls, biscuits and cookies:

Utilize refrigerator rolls, biscuits and cookies for quick tasty hot breads and desserts. Crescent rolls may be rolled out, filled with sweetened fruit and formed into turnovers and baked. They also could be filled with tuna or chicken salad mixture and baked for a hot luncheon dish. Biscuits may be placed on top of fruit cobbler base or on hot meat or chicken stews and baked. Refrigerator cookies may be sliced, flattened and used to make a delicious pie or tart shell.

#### Pan Fried Fish:

Bread the fish fillets by dipping in water, milk, or buttermilk and crackers or bread crumbs when you have time. Chill breaded fillets for several hours. Wrap in aluminum foil and freeze in serving size packets. To serve, thaw slightly and pan fry. Serve with frozen French fries for a quick "fish 'n chips" treat.

## Cooking for One or Two

### Cooking Ideas continued

#### Salads:

You can make tossed salads and they will last for several days. Layer your vegetables in a salad bowl, starting with green onions on the bottom, cucumbers, green pepper, radishes grated carrot (or whichever vegetables you wish). Top with a layer of drained tomato wedges or slices. Place your clean torn greens on top of the tomatoes. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Serve a portion of the salad mixture into an individual serving bowl. Add dressing, toss lightly and serve. Tossed salad will keep for three days in the refrigerator this way.

#### Meats:

It is not necessary to thaw all meats before cooking. Frozen roasts, steaks and chops will take about 1 ½ to 2 times longer to cook as thawed meat. Steaks and chops to be broiled should be placed 1 to 2 inches farther away from the heat source until almost thawed. Then return them to normal level in broiler. To pan broil or fry, cook the meat over low heat until thawed, then cook as usual.

#### Dry Mix:

Prepare only part of a package of a dry mix. To divide a mix, stir the mix, measure it, then divide into equal portions. Reduce the other ingredients proportionately. Mark the package to show how many servings are left.

## Cooking for One or Two

### Food Safety Basics

1. Be sure to wash your hands at least 20 seconds with soap and water before handling food, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers or playing with pets.
2. Fruits and vegetables need to be washed because of surface bacteria. Wash in water with a soft brush and no soap. Even wash fruits and vegetables with rinds or husks that you do not eat.
3. Do not leave perishable foods at room temperature longer than 2 to 3 hours. Refrigerate groceries from the store, deli foods, doggie bags from restaurants, and home-delivered meals promptly.
4. Ideal refrigerator temperature is between 34 and 40 degrees. Keep the freezer at zero or slightly below. Fluctuating freezer temperatures affect food quality. Danger zone for foods is between 40 and 140 degrees.
5. When preparing food to put in the freezer, use moisture and vapor resistant packaging. Each package should be labeled and dated. Double wrapping is suggested as it helps to prevent freezer burn.
6. According to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, there are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Do not defrost on the counter at room temperature, or in hot water.
7. Cooking raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs thoroughly will kill E.coli And salmonella.
8. Refrigerate hard cooked eggs right after cooking and again after dyeing them at Easter time. Discard cracked eggs or those that have been out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours. Eat hard cooked, refrigerated eggs within a week.



## Cooking for One or Two

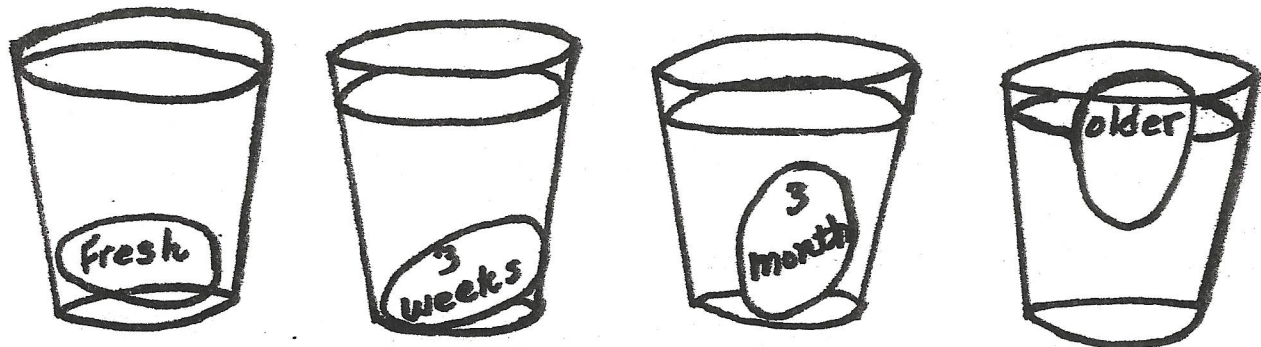
### Food Safety Basics continued

9. Use grade AA or A eggs with clean, uncracked shells. Buy eggs from refrigerated cases only. Keep eggs in the carton rather than placing them in the refrigerator egg holder. Quality deteriorates after 5 weeks in the refrigerator, but the eggs are still safe to eat.

### How To Tell The Age Of An Egg

Place in water. The egg, if fresh, will remain resting at the bottom of the vessel. If not quite fresh, it will rest with the big end raised higher than the small end, and the higher the big end is raised the older is the egg.

The reason why: As an old egg gets older, the water contained in the white of the egg evaporates, and this causes the empty space at the thick end of every egg to become enlarged. The larger that empty space becomes the more the egg rises in the water until in course of time it floats.



10. Put pans under raw meat, poultry and seafood in the refrigerator to prevent dripping onto other foods and causing cross-contamination.

11. Don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meats. Any bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate the cooked meat or other foods.

12. Don't buy any moldy foods from the store. Use leftovers within 3 to 4 days so mold does not have a chance to grow.

13. IF IN DOUBT — THROW IT OUT!

## Cooking for One or Two

### Cutting Recipes

1. Use a recipe with quantities that are easy to divide to make arithmetic easier.
2. Add seasonings a little at a time. The recipe may need more than half.
3. Use smaller dishes and pans for smaller quantities.
4. To halve 3 eggs, use two and decrease the liquid by 2 to 3 tablespoons. A large egg equals about 1/4 cup. If you want to cut a recipe in half that calls for one egg, you can use this method. Lightly beat the egg in a small dish and measure out 2 tablespoons to be used in the recipe. Store the remaining 2 tablespoons in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 2 -4 days to be used in another recipe.
5. Check doneness for halved cake, casserole, meatloaf and other dishes at least 5 to 10 minutes before the original recipe's suggested time.
6. Keep notes about what works and what doesn't.

Original Amount	Reducing Ingredients	
	Half of Recipe	One-Third of Recipe
<u>1 cup</u>	<u>1/2 cup</u>	<u>1/3 cup</u>
<u>3/4 cup</u>	<u>6 tablespoons</u>	<u>1/4 cup</u>
<u>2/3 cup</u>	<u>1/3 cup</u>	<u>3Tbs + 1 1/2 tsps.</u>
<u>1/2 cup</u>	<u>1/4 cup</u>	<u>2 Tbs + 2 tsps.</u>
<u>1/3 cup</u>	<u>2 Tbs. + 2 tsps.</u>	<u>1 Tb. + 2-1/4 tsps.</u>
<u>1/4 cup</u>	<u>2 Tbs.</u>	<u>1 Tb. + 1 tsp.</u>
<u>1 Tb.</u>	<u>1-1/2 tsps.</u>	<u>1 tsp.</u>
<u>1 tsp.</u>	<u>1/2 tsp.</u>	<u>1/4 tsp.</u>
<u>1/2 tsp.</u>	<u>1/4 tsp.</u>	<u>1/8 tsp.</u>
<u>1/4 tsp.</u>	<u>1/8 tsp.</u>	<u>Dash</u>

Modify your favorite recipes. See how many servings. If 6 servings, divide each measurement of ingredients needed by three. If it calls for one cup, then use 1/3 cup. Write your modification in pencil next to ingredient so you do not ruin the original recipe.



# Emergency Substitutions

When you're shopping for just two, it's often impractical to stock half-and-half as well as heavy cream or both light and dark brown sugar, and no one wants to run out to the market for just one ingredient. But often a simple substitution can save you the hassle. Here is a list of common ingredients frequently called for in recipes and their recommended substitutes.

TO REPLACE	AMOUNT	SUBSTITUTE			
Whole Milk	½ cup	5 tablespoons skim milk + 3 tablespoons half-and-half ½ cup 1 percent low-fat milk + ½ cup half-and-half ¾ cup 2 percent low-fat milk + 2 tablespoons half-and-half 7 tablespoons skim milk + 1 tablespoon heavy cream			
Half-and-Half	½ cup	¾ cup whole milk + 2 tablespoons heavy cream ½ cup skim or low-fat milk + ½ cup heavy cream			
Heavy Cream	½ cup	½ cup evaporated milk Not suitable for whipping or baking, but fine for soups and sauces.			
Eggs	LARGE	JUMBO	EXTRA-LARGE	MEDIUM	For half of an egg, whisk the yolk and white together and use half of the liquid.
	1	1	1	1	
	2	1½	2	2	
	3	2½	2½	3½	
	4	3	3½	4½	
	5	4	4	6	
	6	5	5	7	
Buttermilk	½ cup	¾ cup plain whole-milk or low-fat yogurt + 2 tablespoons whole milk ½ cup whole milk + 1½ teaspoons lemon juice or distilled white vinegar Not suitable for raw applications, such as a buttermilk dressing.			
Sour Cream	½ cup	½ cup plain whole-milk yogurt Nonfat and low-fat yogurts are too lean to replace sour cream.			
Plain Yogurt	½ cup	½ cup sour cream			
Cake Flour	1 cup	¾ cup all-purpose flour + 2 tablespoons cornstarch			
Bread Flour	1 cup	1 cup all-purpose flour Bread and pizza crusts may bake up with slightly less chew.			
Baking Powder	1 teaspoon	¼ teaspoon baking soda + ½ teaspoon cream of tartar (use right away)			
Light Brown Sugar	½ cup	½ cup granulated sugar + 1½ teaspoons molasses Pulse the molasses in a food processor along with the sugar or simply add it along with the other wet ingredients.			
Dark Brown Sugar	½ cup	½ cup granulated sugar + 1 tablespoon molasses			
Confectioners' Sugar	½ cup	½ cup granulated sugar + ½ teaspoon cornstarch, ground in a blender (not a food processor) Works well for dusting over cakes, less so in frostings and glazes.			
Fresh Herbs	1 tablespoon	1 teaspoon dried herbs			
Wine	¼ cup	¼ cup broth + ½ teaspoon wine vinegar (added just before serving) ¼ cup broth + ½ teaspoon lemon juice (added just before serving) Vermouth makes an acceptable substitute for white wine.			
Unsweetened Chocolate	1 ounce	3 tablespoons cocoa powder + 1 tablespoon vegetable oil 1½ ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate (remove 1 tablespoon sugar from the recipe)			
Bittersweet or Semisweet Chocolate	1 ounce	¾ ounce unsweetened chocolate + 2 teaspoons sugar Works well with fudgy brownies. Do not use in a custard or cake.			

## Cooking for One or Two

### Potato Salad for One

1/4 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing (option-low fat mayonnaise)  
2 tablespoons chopped celery  
1 tablespoon chopped onion  
1 tablespoon pickle relish, drained  
1 1/2 teaspoons diced pimientos, drained  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1/2 teaspoon cider vinegar  
Dash salt and pepper  
1 medium baking potato, cooked, peeled and cubed

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, celery, onion, relish, pimientos, mustard, vinegar, salt and pepper; mix well. Add potato and toss to coat. Chill for 1 hour.  
Yield: 1 serving

### Creamy chocolate Pudding

1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 cup 2% milk (option-nonfat milk)  
1/2 cup milk chocolate or semisweet chocolate chips  
1/4 cup whipped topping

In a microwave-safe bowl, combine cornstarch and milk until smooth. Add chocolate chips. Microwave on high for 2-1/2 to 3 minutes or until thickened and bubbly, stirring twice. Pour into dessert dishes. Serve warm or refrigerate until serving. Just before serving, dollop with whipped topping.  
Yield: 2 servings

### Mini Sour Cream Biscuits

1 cup biscuit/baking mix  
1/2 cup sour cream (option- low-fat sour cream)  
1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted

In a bowl, combine all ingredients. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls into greased miniature muffin pans. Bake at 425 degrees for 15-18 minutes or until golden brown.  
Yield: 1 dozen



## Cooking for One or Two

Recipes continued

### Orange Sweet Potato Bake

1 medium sweet potato, peeled and  
cut into 3/4 -inch slices  
1/2 medium navel orange, peeled  
and thinly sliced  
1 tablespoon brown sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoons reduced-fat butter  
1 teaspoon water

Dash nutmeg  
Dash salt-optional  
1/8 teaspoon grated orange peel  
1 to 2 teaspoons chopped pecans, optional

Place sweet potato in a saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until almost tender. Drain. Arrange potato and orange slices in a 2 - cup baking dish.

In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the brown sugar, butter, water, nutmeg and salt. Cover and microwave on high for 30 seconds or until mixture is melted and smooth, stirring once. Stir in orange peel. Pour over potato and orange.

Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until potato is tender, spooning glaze over potato and orange occasionally. Sprinkle with pecans if desired. Yield: 2 servings

### Little Cherry Pie

1 can (14-1/2 ounces) pitted tart red cherries  
6 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
Pinch salt  
3 tablespoons cold water

1 1/2 teaspoons butter  
1/8 teaspoon almond extract  
1/8 teaspoon red liquid food coloring,  
Optional  
1 sheet refrigerated pie pastry

Drain cherries, reserving 1/3 cup juice. In a saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch and salt. Stir in water and reserved juice until smooth. Add cherries. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook and stir for 1 minute. Remove from the heat; stir in the butter, extract and food coloring if desired. Cool

Rollout pastry into a 13 inch circle. Cut a 13 inch x 8 inch rectangle from center of circle. Cut widthwise in half; transfer each half to a 5 inch pie plate. Trim pastry even with edge. Add filling. Cut remaining pastry lengthwise into 1/2 inch strips; make a lattice crust for each pie. Bake at 375 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until crust is golden and filling is bubbly. Cool on a wire rack.

Yield: 2 pies

## Cooking for One or Two

Recipes continued

### Mini Meat Loaf

½ slice bread, crumbled  
2 tablespoons finely shredded carrot  
1 tablespoon each chopped onion, celery, and green pepper  
¼ teaspoon salt  
Dash pepper  
2 tablespoons chili sauce or ketchup, divided  
1/4 pound ground beef or ground turkey \*

In a bowl, combine bread, carrot, onion, celery, green pepper, salt, pepper and 1 tablespoon of chili sauce. Add beef and mix well. Shape into a 3-in. X 2 ½ -in. loaf; place in an ungreased shallow baking dish. Top with remaining chili sauce. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes.

\*May need more chili sauce if using ground turkey.

Yield: 1 serving

Some quick tips to help you fit in fruit and vegetables.

Include citrus fruits in salads.

Add shredded carrots to sandwiches, soups or casseroles.

Toss baby spinach leaves into your pasta sauce or use as a filling with meat in fajitas.

Chop sweet potatoes into small cubes and add to chili.

Make smoothies for snacks with frozen berries.

## Cooking for One or Two

### Resources

Taste of Home Magazines

Taste of Home's Cooking for 2 magazines

Cooking for One By Nancy Creech

The complete Cooking For Two Cookbook  
By America's Test Kitchen