



# Cooking With an Instant Pot



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# What is a Instant Pot?

- ▶ The **Instant Pot** is an electric countertop cooking appliance known as a pressure multi-cooker. Its primary and best-known function is that of an **electric pressure cooker**. But it can also function as a slow cooker, steamer, rice cooker, yogurt maker, sauté pan, and more (full list of functionalities depends on the model). Its real achievement is popularizing pressure cooking to a broad audience. It has absolutely skyrocketed in popularity in the last few years.

Source: [www.thekitchen.com](http://www.thekitchen.com)

# History

- ▶ In 2009, Dr. Robert Wang (PHD, engineer, and entrepreneur) began meditating on the idea of building a smart multi-cooker. Along with two friends and no outside investment, the trio announced their creation in 2010: a remarkable new device that combined pressure cooking and slow cooking with the versatility of the rice cookers of their childhood: the Instant Pot.
- ▶ By 2012, the Instant Pot Lux was the most advanced pressure cooker available on the market. It quickly became the best-seller in its category on Amazon, with more than 215,000 units sold during the 2016 Black Friday sale.

Source: [Instantpot.com](https://www.instantpot.com)



# What's the Difference Between an Instant Pot, a Pressure Cooker, and a Slow Cooker?

Even though an Instant Pot can function as a pressure cooker, they're different.

- ▶ **Pressure cookers** offer an easy way to get food on the table fast. Whether it's an electric pressure cooker or stovetop pressure cooker, a pressure cooker drastically reduces cook time by raising the boiling point of water and trapping the steam. Once your food has completely cooked, you can either release the pressure manually with the knob or wait for the steam to naturally release.
- ▶ **Slow cookers** are great for people who want to come home from work to a hot dinner waiting for them. They're called "set it and forget it" appliances for a reason: Just throw ingredients in the slow cooker in the morning, and it'll cook on low heat throughout the day. You can often set them to cook for a certain number of hours and then have it switch to a keep warm setting.
- ▶ **Crock-Pot** is a popular slow cooker brand. People often use its name interchangeably with "slow-cooker," but the brand also makes multi-cookers.
- ▶ **Instant Pot** is the most popular multi-cooker brand, and is basically all of the above! It has tons of functions, including pressure cooking, slow cooking, rice cooking, steaming, warming, and sautéing — all in one appliance that helps expedite the cooking process.

Source: Good Housekeeping Institute

# Do They Really Cook That Fast?

- ▶ According to Bruce Weinstein, co-author of “The Instant Pot Bible,” the answer is yes. “Under high heat and pressure, things cook much faster. You can cook a brisket or pulled pork in under an hour,” he says. “The claims sound outlandish — it reduces cooking time by 70 percent — but that’s because of the steam and the pressure,” Barbone says.
- ▶ There are a couple of caveats, though. You need to add in the time it takes the machine to come up to pressure, usually 15 or 20 minutes.



# The Difference Between Instant Pot Models?

- ▶ **If you just want a basic model** to join in on the IP fun, get the Lux (currently \$65). It has the essential functions and will let you pressure cook, slow cook, and sauté. It does not have a specific yogurt setting.
- ▶ **If you want something with a little extra**, go for the Duo Evo Plus (currently \$120), which came out recently and has 48 preset options (including yogurt), customizable settings, and an LCD display.
- ▶ **For the extra-ambitious home cook** interested in sous vide (vacuum sealing food in a bag) and pressure canning, the Max (currently \$150) adds both of those functionalities. This is the only model of the Instant Pot that gets to a high-enough pressure to pressure can.

# Instant Pot Comparisons

## Instant Pot Duo

- ▶ Replaces 7 appliances.
- ▶ Speeds up cooking 2-6 times faster.
- ▶ The Duo line features a solid range of Smart Programs and features.
- ▶ Comes in 3 sizes: 3,6, & 8 Quart



## Instant Pot Lux

- ▶ Replaces 6 appliances.
- ▶ Combines functions of a Pressure Cooker, Slow Cooker, Rice Cooker, Sauté, Steamer & Warmer.
- ▶ Features 12 smart built-in program buttons.
- ▶ Comes in several colors & styles.



# Instant Pot Comparisons

## Instant Pot Duo

- ▶ 13 one-touch Smart Programs: Soup/Broth, Meat/Stew, Bean/Chili, Slow Cook, Sauté, Rice, Porridge, Steam, Yogurt, Keep Warm, and Pressure Cook.



## Instant Pot Lux

- ▶ 12 smart built-in programs: Soup/Broth, Meat/Stew, Egg, Sauté, Rice, Porridge, Steam, Pressure Cook, Keep Warm, and Slow Cook.







# Instant Pot Tips and Tricks

## ▶ Read up on all the functions before you start

- ❖ We all love jumping in and getting started, especially when we buy a new cooking “toy,” but definitely read up on the instructions and details before you embark on your Instant Pot cooking. It’s a little different and requires getting used to. You’ll experience more success if you do your homework beforehand.

## ▶ Use plenty of liquid

- ❖ Pressure cooking is all about steam, so your food needs plenty of moisture to heat up. The Instant Pot works well for soups and sauces. While not much moisture will be lost during cooking, it’s not a dry heat. You won’t get a crust or crispiness from the Instant Pot.

## ▶ Food cooks by surface area rather than volume

- ❖ Big foods like a roast or a large potato will cook slower than foods cut into smaller pieces. The steam and pressure must reach the inside of each piece of food, so if you want to speed up your cooking time, cut food into smaller pieces.

## ▶ Plan before you cook

- ❖ Be sure to read through recipes before getting started. Some recipes will call for extra supplies—i.e. a spring-form pan, different sealant rings (for use with different foods) or a steamer insert, which you’ll need to purchase separately. Set the Pot to “sealing” rather than “venting,” if you’re cooking food.

## ▶ Don’t overfill

- ❖ Keep in mind, heat and liquid can cause some foods to swell and expand (like beans). Only fill your Instant Pot up to the fill line and leave plenty of room to accommodate for expanding rice, beans, quinoa, and other legumes and grains. For slow cooker recipes, you’ll want to keep the liquid to 1-2 cups (no less than 1).

## ▶ Source: Living Well Spending Less



# Continuation of Tips

## ▶ Use separate sealing rings

- ❖ One of the only areas of the Instant Pot to take on odor are the inner seal rings. You can use different sealing rings for savory foods (like curry, garlic or spiced foods) and for sweet or mild foods (like fruits, desserts and oatmeal). This will prevent the rings from taking on or transferring food scents.

## ▶ Prepare ingredients in large quantities

- ❖ The Instant Pot really shines if you need to prepare a lot of one thing—like a few dozen boiled eggs or chicken breasts. Cook meat like chicken ahead by adding broth or water and a few herbs. You can then shred the meat to use in tacos, casseroles or as you would use rotisserie chicken or pulled pork.

## ▶ Use the steaming insert for quicker cooking foods

- ❖ You can add quicker cooking foods later (you just need to depressurize your Instant Pot before opening it). Use the steamer insert or a heat-safe ceramic, metal or glass bowl. You can also add food wrapped in foil. If you open the Instant Pot to add an ingredient, it will reheat much faster. You can also use the steaming insert for eggs.

## ▶ Use caution with dairy and cheese (unless you're making yogurt)

- ❖ The Instant Pot works great for making yogurt, but it doesn't always do as well with creamy sauces and cheese. While pasta cooks fast, making it great for pasta recipes, milk can scald and cheese gets gloppy and watery. The rapid heat can also cause milk to curdle in some cases. When making a creamy recipe, add dairy such as milk, cream and soft cheese after the pressure cooking process (stir in at the end, using the sauté function) for better results.

Source: Living Well Spending Less



# Continuation of Tips

## ▶ Thicken after cooking

- ❖ Because there isn't much liquid lost during the cooking process, you may need to add a slurry (cornstarch whisked with water) or another thickener to sauces after the meal is finished cooking. Don't add thickener like cornstarch or flour into the Instant Pot, as it's too difficult to control the thickening process and can interfere with the steam. Another option is to remove a portion of the liquid after cooking and set the Instant Pot to sauté.

## ▶ Delay cooking with the timer

- ❖ Delay your cooking start time using the timing feature to get dishes ready when YOU want them. You can use the delay timing feature to start the Instant Pot at any time or to keep food warm after cooking. Because the Instant Pot is so fast, you don't have to wait for meals to defrost or plan so far in advance. Most meals (even roasts) are ready in less than an hour.

## ▶ Keep in mind the lid locks

- ❖ One slightly tricky feature to keep in mind is the Instant Pot seals as soon as pressure begins. So, if you forget an ingredient or need to add ingredients in stages, give it time to depressurize and let off the steam. This can be a problem if you suddenly realize you forgot to add onions to the soup or spices to your tomato sauce. Plan by prepping all the ingredients before you start cooking.

## ▶ Clean with vinegar

- ❖ If the outer part of your Instant Pot gets dirty, you can clean it all naturally with vinegar or steam clean it by boiling water and lemon inside. If you have harder water, the vinegar will also break down any mineral deposits that build up and harm your pot. You can wash most of the inner pot and accessories in the dishwasher.

## ▶ Wash most of it in the dishwasher

- ❖ The inner pot, steam rack and accessories can all be washed in the dishwasher, which makes clean up a breeze! You can just toss the pieces in your dishwasher and go! The lid needs to be hand washed and the outer container can also be wiped down by hand after use). Cleaning your Instant Pot after each use will keep it looking great and lasting a very long time.

Source: Living Well Spending Less

# Summary

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- Instant Pot Tips....