

The **Wonder Box** Cooker

For more info: www.ecowonderoven.com



Recipes and instructions originated from a booklet published by *Compassion* of South Africa in 1978, 1979 and 1980. *Compassion* registered name Wonder Box and the logo of the kneeling figure.

This information may be freely quoted, acknowledgments being made to *Compassion*

Wonder Boxes work like vacuum flasks. In these days when we are being warned of worldwide shortages of food and fuel, this wonder box and its simplicity is designed to keep food at the temperature needed for cooking. Using very little fuel you only use about 15 minutes of energy to bring the food to the required temperature and then put it into the Wonder box. It makes it as though it were a thermos. On the flip side it will also keep ice-cream cold for about 4 hours.

Brief Instructions:

Boil your food on the stove for 10 - 15 minutes until the food is heated right through. (In practice this is too long.)

Use any cooking pot, provided it does not have a long handle, but do not use a large pot for a small amount of food. The W'box does not work well if there is a large air space. Remember that the more food or liquid that you have in the pot, the longer and better it will cook.

Put the lid on the pot before you remove the pot from the stove so the lid can also get hot. Make sure the nest in the bottom cushion is ready to take the pot and that it is nearby so you do not lose heat carrying the pot around. Place pot into the nest of the Wonderbox, making sure that the sides are snug against the pot, so there are no air pockets. Quickly cover the pot with the top cushion, making sure there are no gaps or air pockets. Make sure that no one peeks inside. If this happens, heat will escape, and the food will not cook properly.

Do not leave the Wonderbox on a metal surface while it is being used. Metal is a good conductor of heat and may draw off some heat through the bottom.

When cooking anything like a roast or a whole chicken, the liquid around it can boil before the meat has reached the same temperature. Make sure the liquid covers the meat and it has come to a boil. Meat must be covered with liquid! The cooking time seems to be 3-4 hours, or all day. It is sure to never burn.

Note: We had a chicken that was put in at 9:30 in the morning before church. This single dad prepared the chicken by placing it into an oven-cooking bag. He added spices to the chicken closed the bag completely (no added moisture was added to the bag) then brought the pot of water with the chicken in, to a boil and put it all in to the Wonderbox. We ate with him at 4:00pm and as he tried to carve the chicken that was well cooked; the steam was 'rolling' off the chicken. It was still so hot he worked with forks to carve it. Nb: the opening to the bag was left protruding from under the lid. The Wonderbox was designed for cooking meals, but it can also be used for keeping food hot, cold or frozen for 3-6 hours depending on what it is. For example, frozen meat will stay frozen longer than a tub of ice cream.

The cushions filled with polystyrene can be washed with hot water and soap and hung on the line to dry.

WONDER BOX Sewing Instructions

Material: 3 Meters (yards are 3" shorter than a meter) soft cotton or broadcloth so it will conform to the shape of the pot.

(½ can be coordinated ♦. two colors)

19 scantily filled 1-gallon ice cream pails of Polystyrene beads (it is an insulation that looks like the tiny separate Styrofoam bits that make up the protective packing in electronics, etc.)

"Polystyrene is about the best insulating material and it is also easily washed. If you are only able to get the solid pieces which are used for packing radios etc., you can break it up by grating it." the booklet also says "make cushions out of large plastic bags, mutton cloth or other washable material and fill loosely with any of the following: Polystyrene, Dried corn husks, Woolen materials, Feathers, Waste nylon materials, Flakes of newspaper, sawdust and wood shavings, Hay or other dry grasses.

Sewing instructions: When you sew the wonder box together you sew 2 of the 4 pieces together along the longest sides. You open each of the pairs now and place them right sides together and sew those 2 together all the way around the outside, making an awkward shaped cushion affair. Don't forget the opening to fill through. You then repeat with the 4 bottom pieces. One pair together, sew along the longest side, then the other pair. Open them up and place them right sides together, remembering to leave openings to fill through. I am adding a loop at this point to hang this by when not in use, or dry after washing.

The narrow part of the bottom pattern is the piece you will tuck into the bigger part of the bottom to make the pouch/nest for the pot to sit into.

Hoping not to confuse the issue. If you start where the bottom pattern says 90 (degrees for the angle) and sew down the right side of the pattern and stop just after the second 11 ½ " mark, before the pattern starts back up. That will be one of the two pairs. Do the same with the other two, put right sides together again and sew it all the way around the outside edge now, into the box or ball shape. The same goes for the top cushion, start at the 100, sew down the right and stop just after the 11" mark. The rights sides together and sew again making the shape of the top cushion.

It will not lie flat. It will take the shape of a square cushion when it is filled with the polystyrene beads, and the bottom cushion has a cavity like a nest or pouch.

Top: Fill a little less than ½ full while the bag is hanging. Approximately 7 scantily filled 1-gallon ice cream pails.

A paper funnel works best, as the beads are very static prone. You may want to use an ice cream pail to pour from. Work with two people to fill-one to hold the funnel in and the other to pour. Spread a sheet on floor to catch beads.

Bottom: Cut 4 Fill approximately ½ full with polystyrene beads. Approximately 12 scantily filled 1-gallon ice cream pails

Once this bag is filled, tuck the small end into the center to form the pouch/nest for the pot. Find a good pot that works well in this pouch. No long handles please.

When the pan sits inside the pouch/nest of the bottom, the pan is surrounded on all sides except the top. So, that is where the top/lid comes in. It is very important to keep all of the heat inside this wonder box cooker. One of the pages and the recipes explain that the lid/top of the wonder box must go on immediately with no places for the heat to escape or it will all be for nothing.