

Easy Homemade Sloppy Joes (plus Homemade Buns!)

by Laurie Neverman

This classic homemade sloppy joe recipe is adapted from the Betty Crocker's New Picture Cook Book from 1961. I love this cook book. (They use lard.) They call it "barbeque hamburger mix". This recipe calls for four pounds of ground beef and makes 30-40 sandwiches. This recipe is a hit at family gatherings. Even the picky eaters enjoy it. It uses common ingredients from the fridge and pantry—no high fructose corn syrup required. The flavor improves the next day, so it's a great recipe to make a day ahead and reheat in a slow cooker or crock pot. It also freezes well.

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Total Time: 40 minutes
Yield: 30-40 sandwiches

Ingredients

1 cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons butter
4 pounds ground beef
14 oz ketchup
1 cup water
½ cup chopped celery
2 tablespoons brown sugar
¼ cup lemon juice
2 teaspoons vinegar
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon Lawry's Season Salt
½ teaspoon dry mustard

Instructions

Saute onion in butter. Add ground beef; brown lightly. Drain off excess fat, if needed. Add rest of ingredients and simmer covered 30 minutes. Use to fill 30 to 40 hamburger buns.

- *Before you get started, toast your buns. Toasting the bun makes **ALL** the difference, and only takes a few minutes. Crank up the heat under the skillet to high, and add a drizzle of vegetable oil. When the oil is hot, add the buns, then place the buns cut side up on a cooling rack after they're toasted.*
- *Watch the sauce so that it doesn't reduce too much. When too much of the sauce reduces, it gives you a dry sloppy joe mixture. Everyone likes theirs a little differently, but for me, I cook it down so that I can see the bits of meat, and when I drag my spoon through the sauce, it leaves a trail where the sauce is parted. If the sauce immediately flows back into that trail, it's too liquid-y. I want a few seconds before the sauce covers the trail, which gives me a saucy consistency that's not too liquid.*



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