

## MICROWAVE COOKING

One of the marvels of modern life is the microwave oven, an amazing invention. One of the greatest keys to using a microwave oven is knowing when not to use it. I know there are experts who will tell me that there are tricks to getting better results. For the average person, knowing when to use one and when not to is a valuable lesson.

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### EARN THIS NUGGET

Help your parents with three fast meals on three occasions that require the use of the microwave. You will be the microwave chef taking care of the details under their direction.

LEVEL E

89

1. Never cook an egg in the shell in the microwave. They explode. I mean they really, really explode. They may destroy your microwave.
2. Avoid cooking things in plastic bags or plastic containers unless they are specifically designed for microwave use. Many of them contain chemicals that can have a very detrimental effect on your health over time.
3. Paper can actually catch fire, especially if it has metal in it, which is not uncommon for fast food wrappers.
4. Sauces and soups without a lid will splatter and paint the inside of your microwave.
5. Meats - it's great to heat up some frozen chicken nuggets or some corn dogs. But when you are talking about cooking raw meat from scratch, you are better off cooking conventionally and relegating the microwave to warming those leftovers.
6. Avoid breads. When warming a pizza or that leftover burger, you're probably better off using a hot plate or the broiler. You'll likely prefer the results.

#### Some tricks to getting good microwave results:

- For heating leftovers, the microwave is king, just not pizza or breads as a rule. Frozen veggies tend to cook well in a microwave, extra moisture is a plus, but avoid cooking fresh veggies. You can even steam veggies and get some pretty good results.
- Microwaves tend to cook unevenly, so be prepared to cook in short bursts and stir liquids to prevent mess and overcooking in some areas while other areas remain stone cold.

So in short, the microwave is a marvelous convenient kitchen tool. But it is not the fix all for every cooking need. Know what it does well and use it for that.

