

Easy Homemade Applesauce Recipe

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Why bother making homemade applesauce when you can buy it cheaply? Flavor, my friend, flavor. Most commercial applesauce is bland and watery. The regular commercial stuff doesn't work very well for homemade fruit leather, either. It dries brittle instead of leathery. (Maybe a lack of pectin from overripe apples or apples that are peeled before cooking to sauce? I tried it once and wouldn't use store bought sauce again.) If you learn how to make applesauce, you can make it any way you like. Chunky, spicy, with other fruits – you decide. You can make it on the stove top, or in the crock pot or Instant Pot.

To make homemade applesauce, you want an apple variety that gets soft when cooked, unless you like *really* chunky applesauce. Some top sauce varieties include: Fuji Golden Delicious McIntosh and many others. Granny smith is a good variety to include if

you like your sauce more tart and chunky. Use a mix of apples for more flavor. Most apples will soften with enough cooking. If you want to skip peeling, cook the apples whole, and you get more pectin in the applesauce. You can then use a chinois food strainer, a food processor or you can blend the apples w/ an immersion blender. For chunky applesauce (or to skip straining after cooking), peel your apples before cooking and then mash cooked apples with a fork or potato masher.

Cook your apples in a pot of the stove top (15-60 minutes, depending on size of slices), in a slow cooker (4-6 hours) or Instant Pot (8 minutes).

VARIATIONS: For sweeter applesauce, add white sugar, brown sugar or a little maple syrup. For tart applesauce add some lemon juice, or add some apples that are naturally more acidic, like Granny Smith or Cortland. For seasoned applesauce, add ground cinnamon, fresh or ground ginger, nutmeg, cloves or pumpkin spice. You can also add other fruits, such as strawberries or cranberries. Applesauce popsicles are a favorite treat with young children. If you'd like to dehydrate your applesauce, it makes a great fruit leather all by itself, or combines well with other fruits to make homemade fruit leather with no artificial ingredients.

Canning Applesauce: To can, use 1/2 inch headspace and process pints and quarts for 20 minutes in a water bath canner.

Applesauce Egg Substitute: To substitute applesauce for eggs in recipes like quick breads or desserts, use 1/4 to 1/3 cup applesauce per egg. This works best in recipes that call for only one or two eggs. At three or more eggs, you'll notice more of a texture difference. Adding 1/2 teaspoon baking powder with the applesauce may improve the results.