

## Steps to Making Slow-Cooker Beef Stew

The tricks and techniques we have devised over the years in order to take maximum advantage of the slow cooker are shown to perfect advantage in this hearty classic beef stew.



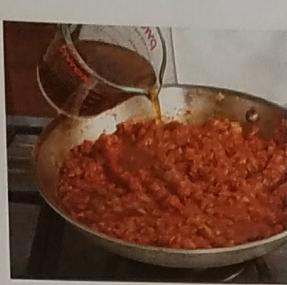
### 1. BROWN MEAT

Heat oil in a skillet and brown the beef on all sides in two batches before transferring to slow cooker. **WHY?** Browning adds flavor.



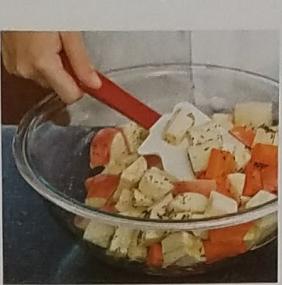
### 2. COOK AROMATICS

Heat oil and sauté the onions. Add tomato paste and sauté a few more minutes. **WHY?** To build a savory base.



### 3. ADD LIQUID

Add 2 cups broth and soy sauce, bring to a simmer, and pour mixture into the slow cooker. **WHY?** A smaller amount of flavorful liquid won't dilute the stew.



### 4. PREPARE VEGETABLES

Toss together vegetables, thyme, salt, pepper, and oil. **WHY?** The vegetables will cook in a packet, so this is your chance to season them.



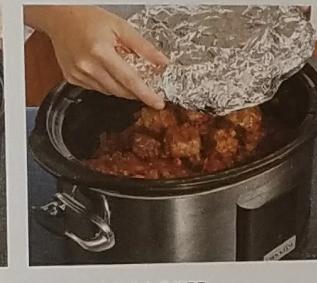
### 5. WRAP IN FOIL

Wrap the vegetables in foil and crimp it closed to make a package. **WHY?** Protected by the foil, the vegetables won't turn mushy with long cooking.



### 6. ADD TAPIOCA

Stir the tapioca into the stew. **WHY?** Tapioca is the one thickener that retains its power in the slow cooker.



### 7. PLACE PACKET

Nestle the vegetables in their foil packet on top of the meat. **WHY?** Placed here, the vegetables will cook the most gently.



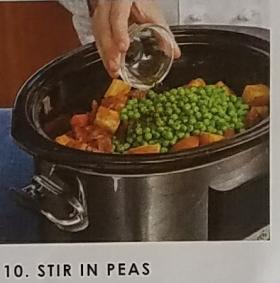
### 8. OPEN PACKET

Six or so hours later, fish out the foil package. Open it very carefully. **WHY?** The released steam is hot enough to burn.



### 9. ADD VEGETABLES

Stir the vegetables back into the stew. **WHY?** The vegetables need to soak up some broth and integrate into the stew.



### 10. STIR IN PEAS

Stir in the peas, cover, and let the stew stand. **WHY?** So the peas can warm through without overcooking.

## SLOW-COOKER HEARTY BEEF STEW

Serves 6 to 8

- 5 pounds boneless beef chuck, cut into 1½-inch pieces
- Salt and pepper
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 4 onions, chopped fine
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken or beef broth
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 pound parsnips, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 pound red potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1½ teaspoons minced fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons Minute tapioca
- 2 cups frozen peas, thawed

**1. BROWN MEAT** Pat beef dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Cook half of beef until well

browned all over, about 8 minutes. Transfer to slow-cooker insert and repeat with additional 1 tablespoon oil and remaining beef.

**2. BROWN ONIONS** Add onions, 1 tablespoon oil, and ¼ teaspoon salt to now-empty skillet and cook until browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring frequently, until paste begins to darken, about 2 minutes. Slowly stir in broth, soy sauce, and bay leaves and bring to boil. Transfer to slow cooker.

**3. WRAP VEGETABLES** Toss carrots, parsnips, potatoes, remaining oil, ½ teaspoon thyme, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper in large bowl. Place vegetables on one side of large piece of heavy-duty aluminum foil. Fold foil over vegetables to form packet that will fit in slow cooker; crimp edges to seal. Stir tapioca into slow cooker; set vegetable packet on top of beef.

**4. SLOW COOK** Cover and cook on high until beef is tender, 6 to 7 hours (or cook on low 10 to 11 hours). Discard bay leaves and transfer vegetable packet to bowl. Carefully open packet (watch for steam) and return vegetables and any accumulated juices to slow cooker. Stir in remaining thyme and peas, cover, and let stand until heated through, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve.

