

Homemade Chicken Soup Recipe

Ingredients

For the Soup Base

- 1 whole chicken (about 4 pounds), cut into pieces (or 3 pounds bone-in chicken thighs)
- 12 cups cold water
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt (plus more to taste)
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 2 sprigs fresh parsley (plus more chopped for garnish)

For the Finished Soup

- 2 large carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup egg noodles (or rice, orzo, or other pasta)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice (optional)
- Fresh dill or parsley for garnish

Instructions

Make the Broth

1. Place chicken pieces in a large stock pot and cover with cold water.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a simmer.
3. Skim off any foam that rises to the surface.
4. Add the chopped carrots, celery, onion, garlic, bay leaves, peppercorns, salt, thyme, and parsley.
5. Simmer gently, partially covered, for 1.5-2 hours until the chicken is falling off the bone.
6. Remove the chicken and set aside to cool.
7. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean pot, discarding the solids.
8. When chicken is cool enough to handle, remove the meat from the bones and shred it into bite-sized pieces.

Finish the Soup

1. In the clean pot with the strained broth, heat olive oil over medium heat.
2. Add the diced carrots, celery, onion, and garlic. Sauté for 5-7 minutes until vegetables begin to soften.
3. Return the shredded chicken to the pot.
4. Bring to a simmer and cook for 10-15 minutes until vegetables are tender.
5. Add noodles or rice and cook according to package directions until tender.

6. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
7. If using, stir in lemon juice just before serving.
8. Garnish with fresh herbs.

Serving Suggestions

- Serve hot with crusty bread or crackers.
- Top with a sprinkle of grated Parmesan cheese for extra flavor.
- For a complete meal, serve with a simple green salad.

Storage & Freezing

- Refrigerate leftover soup for up to 4 days.
- Freeze in airtight containers for up to 3 months.
- If freezing, consider omitting the noodles and adding them fresh when reheating for best texture.

Tips

- For a clearer broth, strain through cheesecloth after the initial straining.
- Add other vegetables like corn, peas, or potatoes in the final cooking stage.
- For a heartier soup, double the amount of noodles or add white beans.
- A dash of hot sauce adds a nice kick.