

THE MICRO WAY LANI BLOOMER



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Know your oven power!

The cooking time of your food is affected by the power of your microwave oven. For instance, my oven takes two minutes to cook two slices of bacon. An oven with more power might take only 1 1/2 minutes, while other ovens with less power might take 3 or 4 minutes to cook the same two pieces of bacon.

If you want to cook in your microwave, and plan to join me each week for *The Micro Way*, I have a homework assignment for you! Find out how much power the

magnetron has that's in your microwave oven. The magnetron is the part of the oven that makes the microwaves. The more power it has, the faster your oven cooks and heats food.

A magnetron is usually rated in watts of power, for example, 350 watts, 500 W, 625 W. Most large countertop microwaves being sold today have magnetrons with 600-700 watts of power. Smaller or older ovens may have as little as 200 watts. Just this year, Amana came out with a microwave with a

1,000 watt magnetron!

How can you find out how much power your oven has? First, look in your owner's manual and cookbook. But don't be misled by the wattage for the whole oven. This might be listed as "Power Consumption-1400W" or something similar. My oven draws 1400 watts, but the magnetron has only 625 watts. The rest goes for the light, fans, etc.

If the magnetron's power is not listed in your manual, call your dealer and ask what the power of the magnetron is, in the model you have. I had to do this, and in fact, a serviceman had to look up the power level in his factory manual! When you find out what the magnetron's power is, write it down in your manual or cookbook so you won't forget it!

If you can't determine the power level for your oven, you can estimate it by seeing how long it takes your oven to boil a cup of tap water. Measure one cup (8 ounces) tap water into a glass measuring cup. Set your microwave to cook on high (full power, cook) for 6 minutes. Watch the water continuously after two minutes until it boils, then stop your oven. Compare your time to the chart below. Remember that variations in the container and water temperatures

make this only an estimate.

Time To Boil	Magnetron's power level
3 min or less	600-700W
3-3 1/2 min.	500-600W
3 1/2-4 1/2 min	400-500W
5 min. or more	200-300W

The cookbook that came with your microwave was written for its power level. If you use other cookbooks, or recipes from other sources you may have to adjust the cooking time to fit your oven, so you need to know its power. Most cookbooks written today are for ovens with 600-700 watts, and have a chart for adjusting the cooking times for lower power levels.

This creamy casserole is easy to make and inexpensive, yet can be "dressed up" for company by adding sliced waterchestnuts or mushrooms. It mixes up quickly with uncooked macaroni, but needs the full 20 minutes of simmering for the uncooked pasta to become tender.

Tuna Casserole

2 6-ounce cans chunk tuna (or use chicken or ham)
1 10-ounce can cream soup, such as celery, mushroom, chicken
1 cup cooked elbow macaroni

1 soup can hot water
1 10-ounce package (about 2 cups) frozen vegetables, peas, mixed, corn etc.
2 teaspoons parsley, chopped or flakes
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Optional: 1 small can sliced water chestnuts, mushrooms, etc. grated or sliced cheese, broken potato chips or corn flakes, etc. for topping, if desired.

1. Combine everything except the topping in a 2 quart casserole. Cover tightly.

2. Cook on high for 10 minutes, stirring once after 5 minutes.

3. Stir, recover tightly and cook on medium (50, 5) for 20 minutes until the macaroni is tender. Stir twice to keep the macaroni from sticking together.

4. Top with cheese, etc. cover and let stand 5-10 minutes before serving. If the topping is not hot enough, heat casserole 30-50 seconds on high, uncovered, before serving.

Note: The cooking times above are for a 600-700 watt oven. For 500-600 W, add 10 seconds to each minute; for 400-500 W add 20 seconds to each minute.

Save energy when cooking, and reduce heat

MEDIA — You've probably noticed how hot cooking makes your kitchen in the summer. This extra heat is not only annoying, it is energy inefficient. Maryetta Dorricott, an extension home economist, advises that energy can be saved through smart and efficient use of your gas or electric range.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and care of your range. For a gas range, make sure the pilot lights are adjusted properly. The gas flames should be pure blue; a yellow flame needs to be adjusted by a qualified technician. When using the oven, keep these points in mind:

• Always make full use of your oven. Plan ahead for meals that can be done totally in the oven. Also, double your recipe if you're baking and freeze half for later.

• Don't be an oven peeker. A significant amount of heat escapes each time you peek in and it wastes energy. Depend on your thermostat, timer and oven window instead.

• Make sure your oven door closes tightly. Keep the seal clean and check for cracks or tears regularly.

• When basting, checking temperature or adding vegetables, remove roast from oven and shut door.

• Arrange racks for baking before turning on the oven. Also, keep preheating to the shortest time possible. Preheating is often unnecessary.

• When you use the cleaning cycle on your self-cleaning oven, do so right after baking. The oven is already hot and it costs less to bring it up to cleaning temperature then.

For surface cooking, follow these tips for saving energy:

• Fit the pot or pan to the surface space of the burner. Place it on the burner before turning unit on.

• Use pots and pans with flat bottoms, straight sides and tight-fitting lids.

• Start most foods on high heat and then reduce the heat once the food reaches boiling. On an electric range, the unit can be turned off several minutes before you expect the food to be done — the remaining heat will continue to cook the food. Don't over cook.

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96	4723	.240 (1/4")	16'- 0"	*540
96	6075	.240 (1/4")	21'- 4"	*720
96	7425	.240 (1/4")	26'- 8"	*900
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126		.240 (1/4")	20'- 4"	*1040

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