



**Panic Button Casseroles**  
When you realize that it's dinnertime and you didn't get anything out of the freezer, don't hit the panic button! Get out the ingredients for one of these quick recipes, and put your microwave to work. These casseroles are very adaptable to your leftovers too, so feel free to substitute ingredients.

When defrosting frozen hamburger that will be browned and used in a casserole, you can use a short cut speed-brown technique. Don't use this defrosting method for hamburger to be made into burgers or meatloaf. The meat becomes warm and may not mix or shape properly. Also, the warm meat increases bacterial action unless it is cooked immediately.

If you brown hamburger in a plastic colander set into another container, the fat will drain as the meat browns and can be discarded easily. Use the container you will make the casserole in to catch the fat, and there will be less dishwashing.

**Speed-Browning Frozen Hamburger**

1. Put 1 pound unwrapped, frozen hamburger in plastic colander or casserole. Set colander on a plate

or in another container to catch drippings. Microwave on high for 2 minutes. Scrape thawed meat off onto a small plate and set aside.

2. Replace frozen meat in microwave and microwave on high for 2 minutes. Again, scrape off any thawed meat and set aside. Repeat this step, if the remaining meat is still frozen too hard to break up (it will depend on the shape it started in!).

3. When most of meat is thawed, break remaining frozen part into pieces, and push to the edge of the container. Return rest of thawed meat to the center of the container. If your recipe uses onion, green pepper, celery, fresh mushrooms, etc. place the chopped (or sliced) vegetables on top of the meat.

4. Microwave on high for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring once to break up meat, until all the meat is browned. If you have added vegetables, the microwave time will be 6 to 7 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Now you can finish the rest of the recipe.

Tip: For 1/2 pound of meat, cut microwave times in half.

This speedy casserole is a favorite at our house. It can be made ahead of time and reheats

well too — just leave the rest off the top until you're ready to eat it. Serve with a green salad and garlic bread for a delicious but quick dinner.

**Pizza Casserole**

- 1 pound ground beef or bulk sausage
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 4-ounce can sliced mushrooms
- 1 16-ounce can pizza sauce
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 1/2 cups macaroni elbows (uncooked)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (4 ounces)

1. Break up meat into a 2-quart casserole. Add onion and pepper on top. Microwave on high for 5 to 6 minutes, stirring twice, until meat is brown and vegetables are tender.

2. Stir in the rest of the ingredients, except cheese. Cover tightly with a lid or plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 15 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes, or until the macaroni is tender.

3. Sprinkle cheese on top and let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

Tips: — This is good with 1/2 pound hamburger or sausage and 4 ounces of finely chopped pepperoni too. Reduce microwave time in step 1 to 3 to 4 minutes, and add the pepperoni with the remaining ingredients in step 2.

Use a different dry pasta, the cooking time may be different. Cook the casserole on high for about 5 minutes longer than the cooking time for the pasta you are using. For instance, if you use wagon wheel pasta, with a cooking time of 15 minutes, microwave the casserole for 20 minutes on high, stirring every 5 minutes.

**Quick Beef Goulash**

- 1 10-ounce package frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 15-ounce jar spaghetti sauce
- 2 cups thin noodles (uncooked)
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 cup (4-ounces) shredded cheese, optional

1. Place box of vegetables in microwave on a small plate and microwave on high for 6 minutes, turning the box over after 3 minutes. Set aside.

2. Break meat into a 2-quart casserole. Microwave on high for 5

to 6 minutes, stirring once to break meat up, until meat is browned. Drain fat if necessary.

3. Stir in vegetables, noodles, water and spaghetti sauce. Cover tightly with lid or plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring twice, until the noodles are tender.

4. Stir again, then sprinkle cheese on top and let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

Tips: — The cooking time of noodles varies greatly with different brands and thicknesses. Check the cooking time for the noodles, you are using and microwave on high for 5 minutes longer than the time on your package.

— Use leftover or drained canned vegetables if desired; skip step 1.

— Use finely chopped or shredded leftover beef instead of hamburger; skip step 2.

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**York County 4-H Achievement Night**

YORK — The York County 4-H Achievement Night will be held Thursday, Oct. 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the 4-H Center.

Top achievers county wide will be recognized for excellence in 4-H project areas. Keystone and State winners will receive plaques.

Silver trays await the outstanding rookie, junior and senior for recognition of their outstanding leadership and involvement in 4-H.

Each family planning to attend should bring a favorite snack. The club with the highest percentage in attendance will receive an award.

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