

# THE MICRO WAY LANI BLOOMER



## Roasting Meats In Your Microwave

A young man complained to me one night about how his microwave ruined a good beef roast. His roast was frozen and he was in a hurry, so he microwaved the frozen roast on high power until it was cooked....

Meats lead the list of foods ruined in a microwave. When meat is overcooked, it turns into shoe leather. When it's microwaved properly it's tender, juicy and moist.

Two mistakes account for almost all the microwaved "shoe leather." The first is trying to cook meat quickly, using high power. High power dries out and toughens the outside of a roast, and leaves the center very rare. (If you're in that much of a hurry, fix a sandwich!)

The second mistake people make is not letting meat finish cooking during the standing time. Beef roasts will have red juice coming out of the meat at the beginning of the standing time, even when cooked to well done. Most people who see the red juice say, "Ooh, that's not done yet!" They stick the roast right back in the microwave to cook longer, and then wonder why the roast got dried out and tough.

If you cook roasts in your microwave, it is really important to understand this: *the center of the roast will finish cooking during the standing time!* Temperatures in the middle of a roast increase one or two degrees each minute during standing time as the center continues to cook.

Don't cook a roast longer until after the standing time, even if it doesn't look done to you when you take it out of the oven. If it's not done enough for you after the standing time, then cook it longer.

The following tips apply to all roasts to be microwaved:

— Thoroughly defrost, then wipe roast dry and rub with garlic, pepper, herbs, etc. as desired. A browning agent will make the roast look browner when cooked.

— Boneless rolled roasts (three to five pounds) cook the most evenly. Let these stand for 10 minutes after microwaving to finish cooking. Larger roasts and those with bones, should stand for 15 minutes.

— If the roast is long and skinny, like an eye roast, shield each end with a small square of foil. If it is unevenly shaped, shield the smaller end with foil.

— Start roasts upside down, and turn them over halfway through the cooking time. With a temperature probe, turn the roast over when the meat reaches 100 to 115 degrees.

— If your oven has a temperature probe, use it for roasts. Insert the tip of the probe into the center of the roast. Don't let probe touch bone or fatty areas. Put the probe in from the side or end of the roast so you won't have to move it when you turn the roast over.

**Roasting Tender Beef Roasts**  
Use these directions for precooked hams and for rare or medium tender beef roasts, such as rib, tenderloin, sirloin tip and top or eye round roasts. Beef rump and cross-rib roasts can be roasted to medium doneness without becoming too tough. For well done beef, use the Closed-Container directions below.

1. Insert the temperature probe into the roast. Place the roast fat side down on a roasting rack or bacon cooker, so the juices will drain away from the meat. Cover loosely with waxed paper.

2. Set the probe temperature for 100 to 115 degrees and microwave on Medium Power (50,5). (If your oven has no probe, cook for the first half of the cooking time, using the times given in the chart.)

3. Turn the roast over. Remove any juice from the bottom of the pan (save for gravy). Use foil to shield roast if necessary, and recover with waxed paper.

4. Set the probe temperature for the desired doneness, and microwave on Medium Power (50,5) until meat reaches temperature set. (Or cook for second half of the cooking time if you have no probe.)

5. When oven turns off, let stand for 10 to 15 minutes to finish cooking. After the standing time, check the meat for doneness; cook it longer if necessary.

**Closed-Container Roasting**  
Use these directions for any fresh pork, for well done beef, and tougher cuts of beef that need

tenderizing, such as chuck roasts. Fresh pork can be safely microwaved when you follow these directions.

1. Put the probe in the roast. Put the roast upside down in an oven cooking bag (or covered microwave roaster). Put oven bag into an open flat pan.

2. For potroasts or tough roasts that need tenderizing, add 1 cup water or juice. You do not need to add liquid for tender roasts.

3. Fasten oven bag loosely around the probe wire, leaving at least a half-inch opening for steam

to escape. Fasten bag with plastic fastener or cut a strip from the end of the bag; do not use a metal twist tie.

4. Set probe for 100 to 115 degrees and microwave on low power (30,3, defrost). Turn roast (bag, juices and all) over in the dish. Do not drain juice; shielding should not be necessary

5. Set probe temperature for desired doneness, and microwave on low power (30,3, defrost). When meat reaches the set temperature, let stand for 10 to 15 minutes. Check for doneness after standing time.

Approximate Roasting Temperatures and Times (600-700 Watt oven at 50% power)

Meat	Probe Temperature*	Serving Temperature*	Approximate Min./Pound
Rare beef	120-125	130-140	10-12
Medium beef	130-135	140-150	13-14
Well done beef	140-145	150-160	15-16
Precooked ham	120-125	130-140	10-12

Fresh pork, hams and very well done beef need a closed container and 30% power:

Very well done beef	150-155	165-170	19-20
Fresh pork, hams	170	175-180	21-22

\* The "Probe Temperature" is the temperature you set in your oven, for the microwave cooking to stop when the meat reaches this temperature. The "Serving Temperature" is the temperature the roast will be after 10 to 15

minutes standing time. Note: The times above are for microwave ovens with 600-700 watts of power. For 500-600 W, add 10 seconds to each minute; for 400-500 W, add 20 seconds to each minute.

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## Upcoming Program For Women

"TODAY'S WOMAN: Color Her World With Health," a seminar for health professionals, will be held 8:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19 at the West Scranton Intermediate School in Scranton. Calcium and osteoporosis, eating disorders and weight management will be the topics addressed at the program sponsored by the Northeast District of the Pennsylvania

Dietetic Association and Dairy, Food and Nutrition Council.

The registration fee, which includes materials, lunch and nutrition break, is \$30. The deadline for registering is November 12. For more information or to register contact Dairy, Food and Nutrition Council in Wilkes-Barre at 717/472-3648 or Williamsport at 717/326-7350.

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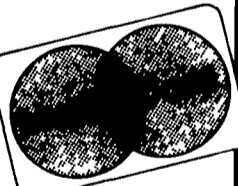
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