

# "Microwave Magic"

By:  
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Stop here for sophisticated fare. Let's try recipes that are a little different and not your every day microwave item. Appetizers and beverages for parties are sometimes mind busters as to what to have that might be different.

What are the advantages of microwaving appetizers and beverages? Many appetizers, such as cocktail meatballs and stuffed vegetables are precooked but require reheating before serving. The microwave does this quickly and efficiently. Individual servings of beverages can be heated or reheated in mugs using the microwave. Melting cheese on crackers is a snap in the microwave. So when thinking of parties, think of those last minute warmups in the microwave.

### Basic Cocktail Meatballs

1 pound ground beef chuck  
1/4 cup quick cooking oats  
2 tablespoons catsup  
1 egg  
2 teaspoons instant minced onion  
1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes  
BAKING DISH - 12-inch  
(Cooking time for beef meatballs)  
TIME AT HIGH - 4 minutes  
TIME AT MEDIUM LOW 3 to 4 minutes

In a medium bowl, combine ground beef, oats, catsup, egg, onion, and parsley flakes; mix thoroughly. Shape into balls. Place in a baking dish, and cover with vented plastic wrap. Micro-

wave at full power (HIGH) for 4 minutes. Turn meatballs over and rearrange in baking dish; cover. Microwave at MEDIUM LOW for 3 to 4 minutes. Drain.

### Deviled Cocktail Tidbits

60 cooked basic cocktail meatballs  
2 (10-ounce) jar currant jelly  
1/4 cup creme de cassis  
1/4 cup prepared mustard  
2 tablespoons prepared horseradish  
3 tablespoons cornstarch  
3 tablespoons cold water  
BAKING DISH - 2-quart  
TIME AT HIGH (Sauce) 8 to 9 minutes  
TIME AT HIGH (Thickened sauce) 3 to 4 minutes  
TIME AT HIGH (Meat added) 8 to 10 minutes

Prepare Basic Cocktail Meatballs. In a casserole combine currant jelly, creme de cassis, mustard and horseradish. Mix well. Cover. Microwave at full power (HIGH) for 8 to 9 minutes. Stir twice. In a small bowl, blend cornstarch and cold water. Stir into casserole. Microwave at full power (HIGH) for 3 to 4 minutes or until thick and bubbly, stirring 3 times. Mixture should be thick and smooth. Stir in meatballs. Cover. Microwave at full power (HIGH) until heated through, stirring once or twice. Serve with cocktail picks.

### Fruity Popcorn Treat

2-quarts popped popcorn  
1 cup salted peanuts  
3/4 cup sunflower kernels  
3/4 cup shredded coconut  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/4 cup butter  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 cup honey  
1 cup golden raisins  
1 cup snipped dried apricots  
BAKING DISH - 12-inch square microwave dish  
GLASS MEASURING CUP - 1 quart  
TIME AT HIGH - 2 minutes  
TIME AT MEDIUM LOW (syrup) 5 minutes  
TIME AT MEDIUM LOW (Popcorn mixture) 5 minutes

In a baking dish combine popcorn, peanuts, sunflower kernels and coconut. Toss to mix well. Set aside. In a glass measuring cup, combine sugar, butter and cinnamon. Drizzle honey into sugar mixture. Microwave at full power (HIGH) for 2 minutes or until boiling, stirring once. Stir well. Microwave at MEDIUM LOW for 5 minutes. Pour over popcorn mixture. Mix with 2 forks, coating all pieces with syrup. Microwave at MEDIUM LOW for 5 minutes or until heated through, stirring once. Stir in raisins and apricots. Cool completely. Store in tightly covered container.

This recipe is a nutritious one for the children as well as colorful. The kids will love it.

A microwave caution: Trying to pop popcorn in the microwave without the proper equipment can be dangerous and even result in fire. Do not attempt to pop popcorn in your microwave unless you have a popcorn popper or packaged popcorn specifically designed for use in the microwave oven.

### Easy Bean Dip

1 (11 1/2-ounce) can condensed bean with bacon soup

1 (5-ounce) jar processed cheese spread  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 tablespoon prepared mustard  
2 teaspoons instant minced onion  
1/4 teaspoon bottled hot pepper sauce  
1 cup dairy sour cream  
BAKING DISH - 1 quart  
TIME AT HIGH - 4 to 5 minutes  
TIME AT MEDIUM LOW - 2 minutes

In a deep 1-quart casserole, combine soup, cheese, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, onion and hot pepper sauce. Cover. Microwave at full power (HIGH) for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring twice.

Stir in 1/2 cup; bean mixture into sour cream. Stir sour cream mixture into bean mixture in casserole. Cover. Microwave at (MEDIUM LOW) for 2 minutes stirring once. Serve hot with vegetable dippers and chips.

### Nut Nibblers

1/2 cup butter  
2 teaspoons celery salt  
2 teaspoons chili powder  
2 teaspoons onion powder  
7 cups mixture of pecan halves, cashews, whole almonds  
GLASS MEASURING CUP - 1 cup  
BAKING DISH - 12-inch square microwave baker  
TIME AT HIGH - 45 seconds  
TIME AT MEDIUM LOW - 40 to 45 seconds

In a 1 cup glass measuring cup, combine butter, celery salt, chili powder and onion powder. Microwave at full power (HIGH) for 45 seconds or until butter mixture has melted. Place nuts in a baking dish. Stir butter and pour over nuts. Toss until coated thoroughly. Microwave at MEDIUM LOW FOR 40 TO 45 SECONDS UNTIL TOASTED STIRRING 3 TIMES. Cool completely. Store in a plastic bag or airtight container.

## New Weigh Of Life

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Lose weight for a lifetime. Penn State's College of Agriculture has introduced a weight-management program designed to help people shed pounds — permanently.

"Although many people lose weight on traditional diets and weight-control plans, 95 percent gain the weight back," says Dr. Madeleine Sigman, assistant professor of food science and a registered dietitian. To address the problem, Sigman developed "My New Weigh of Life," a program that teaches participants to integrate weight loss into their lifestyles. "Managing your weight is a personal issue," Sigman says. "To be permanent it must become part of your life."

The program grew out of current research into theories about obesity, weight loss and coping management. Participants are given accurate, up-to-date information about food nutrition and exercise. They are encouraged to recognize their own needs and choices and to be more physically active. Participants also learn how to lower the fat content of favorite

recipes. The program's philosophy is that there are no forbidden foods, only those a person might choose to eat less often and in smaller amounts. By keeping a diary of their food intake and mood patterns, participants identify behaviors that have led them to overeat. Recordkeeping also helps them set realistic goals.

For permanent results, the program calls for a slow loss of weight, 1/2 to 2 pounds per week. Enrollees must eat three meals daily. "If you don't eat for a long time during the day, your body signals to itself that whatever comes in next should be stored as fat," says Sigman. "If you skip a meal to lose weight, you actually are defeating the purpose."

Toward the program's end, participants are shown how to cope with relapses and how to establish a weight-maintenance support group.

The Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Office is offering "My New Weigh of Life" at two locations this winter and spring. If you would like more information, call the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension Office at 717-394-6851.

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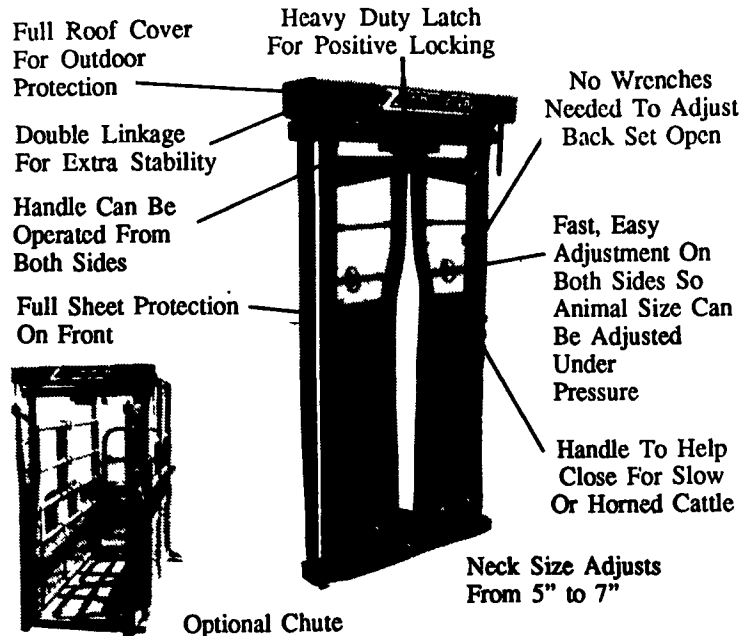
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