

# Clever Cooking with Tins of Tomatoes

It is probably best to cook these two base sauces in the evening as you would be working with three pans at the same time – but they will make cooking much easier in the coming days while the children are around.

**The recipes are for two basic sauces – a simple one and a thick one, and then you use them in other recipes.**



The first is very simple and easy to make. The second sauce takes a bit more work, but it contains lots of healthy vegetables and makes it easy for children to eat vegetables without too much fuss.

Although these recipes list chopped tomatoes, it's fine to use tinned whole-tomatoes instead. Just break them up with a wooden spoon as you cook.

## Simple Tomato Sauce – makes two base quantities for other recipes

<b>Ingredients</b> 1 tablespoon vegetable oil 2 medium white or red onions 2 cloves of garlic 2 tins of chopped tomatoes in tomato juice 1 tsp oregano (omit if the tinned tomatoes have herbs in) ½ tsp salt ½ tsp white pepper Possibly 1 tbsp tomato puree	<b>Equipment</b> Sieve Bowl/extra saucepan - bigger than sieve Chopping board Sharp knife Medium size saucepan with lid Wooden spoon Measuring spoons Measuring jug
<b>Method</b> Put the sieve over the bowl/spare saucepan and pour the content of the tins of tomatoes into the sieve. Leave to drain. Keep the drained juice. Chop the onion and garlic into very small pieces Put the oil in the saucepan and heat slowly – when you can swirl the pan and the oil spreads around add the onion and garlic. Cook the onion and garlic on a gentle heat with the lid on until they are soft – stirring occasionally. This could be 10-15 minutes – be careful not to overheat as it will dry out and stick. When soft and slightly translucent add the drained tomatoes, oregano, salt and pepper. Turn up the heat until the mixture is just boiling then turn down again to a low heat. Continue to cook on a low heat for another ten minutes to allow flavours to mix. Taste. Add seasoning if you want more. Add a little of the drained juice if the sauce is too thick – do this one tablespoon at a time. Or if the sauce seems to be too thin add a tablespoon of tomato puree.	<b>Additional Notes</b> You can use whole tinned tomatoes – you will need to chop the tomatoes up a bit. The sauces will keep for 2 days in the fridge in an airtight container, and for up to 3 months in the freezer. Keep the drained juice to make soup. Divide the final sauce in two and use or save in sealed containers. You could use it as a base for light tomato soup, or to make the pasta or ratatouille recipes on the next page.

# Meal Ideas that use Simple Tomato sauce

## Pasta - serves 2 adults

Cook enough pasta for two adults according to the instructions on the packet. Slowly warm up one base quantity of sauce in another pan until very gently bubbling while the pasta is cooking. Drain the pasta and add to the sauce; mix together serve with some cheese sprinkled on top and some fresh basil.

## Tomato soup – serves 2-3 – this is a light meal soup

Use one base quantity and the drained tomato juice from two tins – this will be about half a pint/300mls. Put the two together in a pan and bring gently to boiling point. Serve with chopped basil and crusty bread. You can add small cubes of cheese and croutons to make it more substantial.

## Ratatouille – a French vegetable stew – serves 3-4

Ingredients	Equipment	Method
1 tablespoon oil	Chopping Board	Chop garlic in very small pieces.
1 medium onion	Sharp knife	Chop onion, aubergine, green pepper and courgette into mixed size chunks, some small, some medium sized.
2 cloves garlic	Large saucepan with lid	Heat oil slowly in pan – add all the vegetables – stir and leave on a low heat with the lid on for 10-15 minutes to soften. Check regularly and turn down the heat if veggies are sticking to the bottom.
1 large courgette	Wooden spoon	Add tomato sauce, puree, oregano and salt and pepper, bring to simmering, and leave cooking for 30-45 minutes. Add a little water if it is too dry.
1 green pepper	Measuring spoon	The vegetables will be soft but still a bit chunky.
half a medium aubergine		
One base quantity of simple tomato sauce		
1 tablespoon tomato puree		
1 tsp dried oregano		
Salt and Pepper to taste – start with ¼ teaspoon of each		
About 100mls water, if needed		
The left over half of aubergine can be roasted for about 20-30 minutes when you are cooking something else in the oven and then chopped into a salad		

## Thick tomato veggie sauce – makes two base quantities for meals overleaf.

<p><b>Ingredients</b></p> <p>1 tablespoon oil</p> <p>2 medium white or red onions</p> <p>2 medium/large carrots ( you want about 160gr carrots)</p> <p>2 sticks of celery</p> <p>2 cloves of garlic</p> <p>2 tins of chopped tomatoes in tomato juice</p> <p>1 tsp oregano</p> <p>½ tsp salt</p> <p>¼ tsp white pepper</p> <p>Possibly 1 tbsp tomato puree</p>	<p><b>Equipment</b></p> <p>Sieve</p> <p>Bowl/spare saucepan - bigger than sieve</p> <p>Chopping board</p> <p>Sharp knife</p> <p>Medium size saucepan with cover</p> <p>Wooden spoon</p> <p>Measuring spoons</p> <p>Measuring jug</p> <p>Blender</p>
<p><b>Method</b></p> <p>Put the sieve over the bowl and pour the contents of the tins of tomatoes into the sieve. Leave to drain – you should press them with the back of a tablespoon to get as much of the juice out as possible. Keep the drained juice.</p> <p>Chop the onion into chunks.</p> <p>Chop the garlic into small pieces.</p> <p>Peel and chop carrots into small pieces</p> <p>Wash and chop celery into chunks</p> <p>Put the oil in the saucepan and heat on a low to medium heat.; when you can swirl the pan and the oil spreads around add the onion and garlic. Cook the onion and garlic on a gentle heat – stirring occasionally.</p> <p>After five minutes add the carrots and celery and cook for another five minutes on a medium to low heat – you should hear a little sizzling noise, but it should not be so hot that things start to stick.</p> <p>After another five minutes add the drained tomatoes, the oregano and salt and pepper.</p> <p>Turn up the heat until the mixture is just boiling then turn down again to a low heat. You may need to add some drained tomato juice so that it does not stick to the pan. Do this one tablespoon at a time – you do not want spare liquid in this thick sauce.</p> <p>Check and stir regularly</p> <p>Cook for 10 minutes with the lid on.</p> <p>Cool for a few minutes and then blend on a low setting until smooth.</p>	<p><b>Additional Notes</b></p> <p>You can use whole tinned tomatoes – you will not need to chop the tomatoes as they will be blended.</p> <p>The sauces will keep for 2-3 days in the fridge in an airtight container, and for up to 3 months in the freezer.</p> <p>Keep the drained juice to make soup.</p> <p>Use one base quantity for each of the following recipes:</p> <p>Home made pizza – you can buy ready made pizza bases- children will love to decorate their own pizza</p> <p>Meal in a Soup – this is a meal on its own</p> <p>One pot chicken supper</p> <p>If the sauce seems to be too thin add a tablespoon of tomato puree.</p>

## Meal Ideas that use Thick Tomato Veggie sauce

Each recipe uses one base quantity i.e. half the amount produced by the recipe above.

### **Pizza – serves 2-4**

One base quantity will cover 2-3 medium size pizza bases – you can buy these ready to use. Follow the instructions on the packet. Add a thinly sliced tomato, chopped red pepper and cheese (mozzarella or cheddar) and any other toppings of your choice – children love doing this.

### **Meal in a soup – serves 2-3**

Cook two sausages and chop into bite size chunks. Chop one sweet potato into small pieces and cook gently until soft in the tomato juice drained when making the base sauce. When almost cooked add the base quantity of smooth tomato veggie sauce, a tin of drained ready cooked cannellini beans, and the chopped sausages. You can add about one teaspoon mixed herbs or thyme or smoked paprika to add flavour. Check for seasoning. Bring to the boil and simmer for a few minutes.

### **One pot chicken supper – serves 2**

Take one large chicken breast, or 2-3 thighs and cut into medium size pieces. Cut 2 large or 10 small washed but not peeled potatoes into bite size pieces. Put chicken and potatoes into a casserole dish, with the tomato sauce. You can also add a vegetable of choice – if it is hard ( eg carrots, parsnips, swede, squash) cut it the same size as the potato. If it is a soft vegetable ( eg beans, broccoli, courgettes), keep the pieces bigger so they don't get mushy. Put the lid on the dish and cook covered in the oven for an hour on 180 degrees/Gas Mark 4.