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# SLOW COOKERS

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Be safe and smart as you use these great kitchen tools!

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## Food Safety Tips:

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Use the appropriate packaging materials and use them for their intended purpose. There's no reason that you can't use slow cooker liners for easy clean-up; they just aren't for freezer storage.

As you're getting ready in the morning, start the food off on high and then turn it to low before you leave the house. This helps jump start the temperature in the slow cooker and rushes the food through the temperature danger zone.

Above all, don't listen to "know it alls" and "we've always done it this ways" that you'll find in the comment section. Check out the evidence and researched-based references on food safety.

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## Temperature Danger Zone:

There are a lot of recipes out on the internet that advocate putting food directly from the freezer into the slow cooker. That's not food safe — don't do it!

Putting frozen food in a slow cooker provides an excellent opportunity for bacteria to grow as the food makes its way slowly through the temperature danger zone to a safe minimum internal temperature. That's why the USDA does not recommend the direct-from-freezer-to-slow-cooker process. Instead, take the frozen food from the freezer at least the night before and allow it to thaw in the refrigerator. One overnight may not be enough, so you may need to plan ahead a little.

