



Enjoy a Simpler Life

Author: Jean Hitchcock

If you feel stressed out at the end of the day
And you try to rest but you find no way,
You may need to simplify the life that you live
Or you soon may find you have nothing to give.
Try some suggestions from this little book
And soon you could have a different outlook.

Whether you clean using products on hand
To live “more green” and protect the land.
Or cook with homemade mixes to save some time
And enjoy nutritious meals with taste sublime.

Life can be simple, it is up to you
To take more control of the things you do!



Enjoy family and friends more and more each day

And for each of them, don't forget to pray!

Life Made Simple



A journey toward the basics.

Indiana Extension Homemakers Association
Educational Focus
2009-2010

Sponsorship By:

Indiana Extension Homemakers Association

To strengthen families through continuing education,
leadership development, and volunteer community support.

www.IEHA-families.org



Indiana Extension Homemakers Association, founded in 1913, continues to build on its rich heritage by working to strengthen Indiana homes & families. Membership is open to all regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin.

*For more information about membership, contact your county
Purdue Extension Office listed in your phone book or call
888-EXT-INFO.*

For more information on improving the quality of life :
www.cfs.purdue.edu/extension/



Cream of Something Soup Mix

Mix:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 c. powdered milk | 1 Tbsp. celery flakes |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ c. chicken bouillon | $\frac{3}{4}$ c. cornstarch |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. crushed dried thyme | 2 Tbsp. dried onion flakes |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper | $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. crushed dried basil |

To serve: To make the equivalent on one can of condensed soup, blend $\frac{1}{3}$ c. mix and $1 \frac{1}{4}$ c. water. Cook slowly, stirring, until desired consistency. You may alter this by adding celery, mushrooms, leftover veggies, etc. Excellent "extra" seasoning for casseroles as well.



Instant Mashed Potato Flakes

These dried flakes can be added to thin gravies, sauces & soups to thicken. Just add about 1 tablespoon at a time until the right thickness is reached. Use seasoned flakes to bread fish fillets before baking for a crispy crust. Quickly prepare amounts of mashed potatoes needed for potato soup or topping beef stew.

Are You Eating Right?

Make sure you're eating right by entering a log of your meals into the USDA's easy-to-use interactive menu planner (mypyramid.gov/menu-planner), which will tell you whether or not you are meeting nutrition goals. It can even calculate the nutritional value of some brand-name foods.



Brownie Mix

2 c. cocoa
8 c. flour
1 1/3 tsp. salt



1 1/3 tsp. baking powder
8 c. sugar
4 c. nuts (optional)

Sift the dry ingredients together well & add nuts, striving for distribution. To prepare: For each 1 1/2 c. of mix, add 1 egg, 1/3 c. oil, 1/2 tsp. vanilla; stir just until well blended. Pour into 8 X 8-inch pan. Bake 25 minutes at 350°F.

Cake Mix - White or Spice

Mix: 1 3/4 c. shortening
5 1/2 c. cake flour
4 1/2 tsp. salt

3 1/2 c. sugar
2 Tbsp. baking powder



To serve white cake: For each 1 c. + 2 Tbsp. mix, add:
1 egg
1/3 tsp. vanilla
1/4 c. milk

To serve spice cake: For each 1 c. + 2 Tbsp. mix, add:
1 small egg
1/3 tsp. cinnamon
1/6 tsp. cloves
1/4 c. milk
1/6 tsp. allspice

Bake at 350°F. for 30 to 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Hamburger Stroganoff

1 lb. hamburger
Onion & Celery, chopped
1 can beef broth
1/2 c. sour cream

Salt & pepper to taste
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 small can mushrooms
Bag of noodles



Brown meat, onions, celery, salt & pepper. Add chicken soup & beef broth. Simmer 15 minutes. When ready to serve, stir in the can of mushrooms & sour cream. Serve over noodles. Makes 4 servings.

Purpose of

"Life Made Simple"



What is a simple life?

The simple life is best defined as a journey. It is a removal of the things that distract us; possessions and commitments that are no longer meaningful & household or other duties that are not necessary. The simple life is best approached slowly, starting with the little things.

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Environmental Management

1. Recycling

Indiana Environmental Management (IDEM)

1-800-988-7901

www.IN.gov/idem/oppta/recycling/swmd/



Items to recycle:

All Paper

Glass

Plastic - look at the numbers on the recycling triangle on bottom of bottle. Some centers only take certain numbers.

Metal

Aluminum

"Going Green" means a lot of things. The best place to start is the trash can. Americans create enough trash that it has become a major economic problem. Recycling is an important part of waste reduction. Follow these steps to get started:

First	REDUCE	the amount of waste you generate.
Second	REUSE	items
Third	RECYCLE	your waste.

Eco Mall: This site list 100's of sites where you can purchase products made from recycled items and eco-friendly products. www.ecomall.com

***Freecycle.org** is a grassroots and entirely nonprofit movement of people who are giving (& getting) stuff for free in their own towns. It's all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Membership is free. To sign up, find your community by entering it into the search box above or by clicking on "Browse Groups" above the search box.

♻️ Recycling Hint ♻️

Plastic Condiment Bottles

Wash a plastic ketchup or salad dressing bottle in hot soapy water and fill it with liquid laundry detergent. Use it to squirt detergent directly onto stains before placing clothes in the washing machine.

Taco Seasoning Mix

3 Tbsp. chili seasoning

3 tsp. sugar

1 tsp. onion powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cayenne or crushed red pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt



2 Tbsp. parsley

2 tsp. garlic powder

1 tsp. dried cilantro

1 tsp. pepper

Substitute 2 Tbsp. Taco Seasoning Mix for one (1) pkg. commercial mix.

Use 2 Tbsp. Taco Seasoning Mix with one (1) cup water & 1 lb. ground beef.

Hot Chocolate Mix

13 c. powdered milk

1 lb. box instant cocoa (Nestles® or Hershey's®)

3 c. instant creamer (like Cremora®- can be flavored), *optional*

4 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar or Splenda®

Dash of salt

Blender works best - better dissolving. To serve, put $\frac{1}{4}$ cup powder in mug, fill with hot water & stir.



Pie Crust / Pastry Mix

Mix: 10 c. flour

2 Tbsp. salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ c. sugar

Sift together; store in airtight container.

To prepare: Blend together with a fork: 2 oz. vegetable oil and 1 oz. milk. Stir until frothy; blend in a FULL cup of the dry mixture. Work the dough with your hands, just like play-doh, covering the bottom and sides of your pan. This can be rolled out in small amounts and cut with a cookie cutter to make a "top crust", or crumbled for crumb-top pie.

Ground Beef Master Mix

5 Tbsp. oleo
2 1/2 c. chopped onions
5 c. chopped celery
5 cans tomato sauce (15 oz. each)
1/2 tsp. black pepper

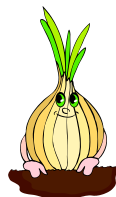
5 lbs. ground beef
1 c. chopped green pepper
5 cans tomato soup, diluted
5 tsp. salt

Cook first 5 ingredients in a large roaster, just until vegetables are tender. Add rest of ingredients & bake for 1/2 hour, stirring occasionally. Divide into 5 freezer containers. To serve: For chili, beef-a-roni, pizza, spaghetti, sloppy joe, Spanish rice- add cooked rice or pasta to suit taste.

Onion Soup Mix

1/2 c. minced dried onion
1 tsp. onion powder
2 Tbsp. sugar

4 Tbsp. beef bouillon
1/4 tsp. celery seed



Use for dips or soup; just like Lipton's®.

Ranch Dressing & Dip Mix

Mix: 1 1/2 Tbsp. dried parsley
1/4 Tbsp. dried tarragon
1 Tbsp. salt
1/2 Tbsp. garlic powder



1/2 Tbsp. dried chives
1/2 Tbsp. lemon pepper
1/4 Tbsp. oregano

To serve as dressing: Mix 1 Tbsp. mix with 1/2 c. mayonnaise and 1/2 c. buttermilk

To serve as dip: Mix 1 Tbsp. with 1/2 c. mayonnaise and 1/2 c. sour cream or yogurt. Refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

2. *Composting*



Composting is not a new idea. It is the decomposition of plant remains and once-living materials. Yard and kitchen waste make up 30% of the waste stream in the USA. There are two major kinds of food that composting microbes need: Greens and Browns. Greens are fresh (often green) plant materials such as green weeds, kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee, tea bags, etc. Leave the green grass clippings on the yard - cut it 3" in summer, and 2" for winter. Browns are dry and dead plant materials autumn leaves, dry brown weeds, wood chips or sawdust are a few. Compost is rich in nutrients and improves soil in ways synthetic fertilizers cannot. You can use compost on house plants, gardens, lawns, and landscaping. Contact your local home building supplier for easy beginner compost bins, or go to www.vegweb.com for a start or www.lifescrpt.com to learn more about making your own compost.



3. "Green" your Cleaning Bill

Are store-bought cleaning products eating at your budget? Here are a few simple supplies you have in your kitchen that can help:

- Baking soda
- Washing soda (Arm & Hammer®)
- White distilled vinegar
- A good liquid soap or detergent
- Clean Spray bottles (save those plastic bottles)
- Glass jars

Tips for using these simple supplies in your home:

- *Moldy shower curtain: Pour white vinegar into a new spray bottle and spray the shower after each use.
- *Killing odors in the bathroom or kitchen: Boil 1 tbsp. of white vinegar and 1 c. water on the stove at the same time you are cooking.
- *Fresh plants give off oxygen and breathe carbon dioxide; this helps to eliminate odors, too.

🌀 Recipes for Cleaners 🌀

All-Purpose Cleaner

- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. washing soda
- A dab of liquid soap
- 2 c. hot tap water

Combine ingredients in a spray bottle and shake until the washing soda has dissolved. Apply and wipe off with a sponge or rag.

Upholstery Cleaner

- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. liquid castile soap
- 3 Tbsp. water

Blend in a bowl and rub foam into upholstery with a cotton cloth. Rinse with a sponge.

General Spot Remover

- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. borax dissolved in hot water. Let cool.

Sponge on fabric or carpets.

Homemade Pre-treating Stain Remover

- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. ammonia
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. white vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. liquid soap
- 2 liters water

Mix all ingredients in a spray bottle. Shake well before use. Spray liquid onto stain and let sit for a few minutes; launder as usual.

Easy-As-A-Mix Pizza

Makes one 11 to 12 inch pizza, 4 servings



- 1 c. Better Baking Mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. tomato sauce
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{3}$ c. water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. oregano or Italian Herb mix
- 1 c. grated part skim mozzarella cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Grease 12x15 inch or larger baking sheet or 12-inch pizza pan.

1. Measure mix into a bowl. Add oil and water. Stir to form soft dough.
2. Transfer dough onto baking sheet. Sprinkle with flour. Dip fingers in flour and pat dough into a circle about 11 to 12 inches across. Use more flour as needed. Crust will be thin.
3. Spread pizza with tomato sauce. Leave about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch around edge with no sauce.
4. Top pizza with onion, oregano, and cheese.
5. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until edges are brown and cheese is melted and starting to brown.
6. Refrigerate any leftovers within 2 hours.

Shake and Bake



- Mix:
- 4 c. flour
 - 1 c. bran flake cereal
 - 2 tsp. garlic powder
 - 2 tsp. chili powder
 - 1 tsp. ground pepper
 - 1 tsp. basil
 - 2 tsp. dried cayenne pepper
 - 2 Tbsp. dried parsley flakes
 - 1 Tbsp. onion powder
 - 2 Tbsp. taco seasoning
 - 1 tsp. curry powder
 - 1 tsp. crushed dried oregano

Crush cereal to a gritty consistency. Add rest of ingredients and blend well. To serve: Dredge 1 disjointed chicken in a small amount of mix. Melt $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter in a shallow baking pan. Place chicken pieces in pan, skin side down, and baste top with melted butter from the pan. Bake uncovered for 25 minutes at 400°F. Turn skin side up; reduce heat to 350°F. Bake until tender, about 30 minutes.

Better Baking Mix

Makes 9 cups

- 4 c. all-purpose flour
- 4 c. quick rolled oats or whole wheat flour
- 1 1/3 c. nonfat dry milk
- 4 Tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt



1. In large mixing bowl, stir all ingredients until well mixed.
2. Store in closed covered can, rigid plastic container or heavy plastic bag, sealed.
3. Label and date the container. Use within 6 months.
4. Stir lightly before using in recipes.

Note: *What makes this a better baking mix?* It uses whole grains, and the recipes use oil instead of solid fat. Whole grains make breads heavier in texture. Using half white flour keeps the breads light in texture. To make the mix 100% whole grains, use 4 cups whole wheat flour mixed with 4 cups of quick oats.



Pancakes

Makes about 12 medium-sized pancakes

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 2 c. Better Baking Mix | 1 c. water |
| 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil | 2 eggs, beaten |

1. Put all ingredients in a bowl.
2. Stir just enough to moisten dry ingredients.
3. Preheat skillet on medium-high heat. The skillet is ready when drops of water "dance" on the dry surface. Add a tea spoon of vegetable oil or use cooking spray onto hot skillet.
4. Cook slowly until the surface is covered with bubbles. Turn & cook until second side is lightly browned.

II. Simplify Daily Living



A positive attitude is what defines a homemade simple. It is about ideas and products that make your life more enjoyable. It is about finding ways to simplify, organize, and inspire your life.

1. Ten Simple Rules for a Happier Life

Author: Dr. Patricia A. Ferrell

www.drferrell.net

"We've been taught that we've got to just stick to that old saying 'you've made your bed, now lie in it', or that seemingly empty phrase 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'; neither is very helpful." Dr. Ferrell came up with these simple rules that may provide what we all need in life; the belief that we can make things better for ourselves and that we are in control, if only we recognize it.

Learn to say "NO" and stick with it. 'NO' isn't a bad word. It doesn't mean you have to become self-absorbed or disagreeable, but you need to learn that for every question or request there are three answers; "Yes", "No", and "I'll think about it".

Look for the silver lining. It may not make itself apparent immediately, but it's there; just let yourself see it when it does appear.

Sit back and smell the roses. Do you realize that all of our senses can lead to our body's feeling refreshed and that everyone needs a little time out just to do some 'creative daydreaming' once in awhile? It's a good use of your time because it allows you to cut the stress cycle and get a better perspective on things.

Stop praising yourself for how little sleep you need.

View hobbies and vacations as deposits you make to your "life savings" account. Vacations allow us prolonged periods of time to de-stress and hobbies give us time at home to get the equivalent of 'naps' from the cares of life. It's time well spent and everyone should find something they love and that gives them some period of escape.

Eat like there is a tomorrow. Food is wonderful, but when you use it as a substitute for joy in your life, what are you really doing?

Count your daily 'laugh' quotient. Stress builds up and attacks our immune system. It's a well known mind-body connection, so to counteract that attack, laughter is one of the best medicines.

Increase your appreciation of nonsense. Life doesn't need to be deadly serious all the time. Learn to look for things that are just 'nonsense'.

Accept that a straight line isn't always the best way to get somewhere in life. Despite what our math teachers taught us, a straight line may be the shortest distance between two points, but it is not the best way to get the things we want in life.

Glory in your age and what you've learned in life. People grow better with time. Don't downgrade your age or what you've learned in life. They're valuable lessons that you can share with others. Survival means success in life.



Irish Blessings

Author: Unknown

May flowers always line your path and sunshine light your day.

May songbirds serenade you every step along the way.

May a rainbow run beside you in a sky that's always blue.

And may happiness fill your heart each day your whole life through.

- **Pie Pastry:** Substitute one teaspoon of vinegar for one teaspoon of the cold water called for in the recipe and the pastry will be much flakier.
- **Quick Sauces:** Use condensed cream soups such as cream of mushroom to make fast and easy sauces.
- **Quick Tenderizer:** Use vinegar as a meat tenderizer. Add a tablespoon to water when boiling meat or ribs for stews. This basic cooking tip will help tenderize even the toughest meat.
- **Wilted Vegetables:** Soak wilted veggies in two cups water with one tablespoon vinegar to help bring them back to life.

Author Resource: Andrew Chin is a recognized authority on the subject of cooking. His website, theweekendchef.com provides a wealth of information on everything you will need to know about cooking tips.



Master Mixes

Creating mixes for your pantry without going to the grocery store not only saves you time, money, gas, and reduces packaging, but allows you to control the additives and special needs for your diet. You have the convenience of having all your favorite foods, customized to fit your tastes, in your own pantry. Most of the recipes are geared to "per serving" or "per cup" of mix and you can adjust from there.

Recipe Hint



Check out this book from your local library

Cheaper & Better

Homemade Alternatives to Store-bought Goods

Author: Nancy Birnes ISBN: 0-06-096083-3

MAKE COOKING SIMPLE

15 Simple Cooking Tips to Make Your Life Easiest



By: Andrew Chin
www.misterarticle.com

With today's busy lifestyles becoming more prevalent, learning and using these basic cooking tips will save you time and headache. The following fourteen are just a tiny handful of the many basic cooking tips that you could integrate into your everyday life to save both time and money!

- **Bacon:** Reduce shrinkage by running cold water over it before frying.
- **Beans:** Stop gas attacks by adding acidic ingredients (vinegar, tomatoes, molasses or lemon juice) to a pot of beans *after* they have cooked until tender.
- **Boiled Eggs:** Add some vinegar or a little salt to the boiling water when boiling eggs. This basic cooking tip will keep the egg in the shell if it cracks.
- **Ripening Fruits and Vegetables:** Put your unripe fruit and vegetables in a brown paper bag and place in the bag in a dark cupboard for few days.
- **Salads:** Cut your iceberg lettuce into wedges instead of tearing salad greens to save time making a salad.
- **Spaghetti Sauce:** Add a small pinch of bicarbonate of soda to your spaghetti sauce to lower the acid taste from the tomatoes.
- **Corn:** Place the corn directly into boiling water, and do not add salt. Do not boil corn for more than three minutes. Over-cooking reduces the taste level.
- **Frozen Vegetables:** When they are stuck together, simply run boiling water over them.
- **Grating Cheese:** Freeze for twenty-five minutes before grating. It will shred so much easier.
- **Pancakes:** Use a small amount of sugar in the batter and they will brown more quickly.

2. CLUTTER CONTROL

Reducing household clutter can simplify your daily living by giving you more time, space, and money. It's important to get rid of the clutter before you organize or else you just have "organized clutter".

A PLAN OF ATTACK

- start with the area of your life that causes you the greatest pain
- create a list of the areas you want to work on in order of priority
- include a deadline for completing each project
- try to tackle one small area at a time -- drawer, cabinet, shelf, etc.
- set aside some time each week to work on a different area
- move systematically throughout your home
- completely finish one area before beginning another
- find the organizing style and space that suit you
- recruit some organizing "assistants" -- friends, family, neighbors
- if no volunteers, consider hiring a professional organizer to help

ASKING THE HARD QUESTIONS

- When was the last time you used it?
- When will you (realistically) need it again?
- Why would you need it again?
- Who could use this now?
- What would you need it for?
- Is it easily replaceable?
- What's the worst thing that would happen if you got rid of it?
- Is it beautiful, useful, or loved?

BEFORE YOU START

- know what you want from your storage before beginning
- maximize space? see everything you own? cut down on cleaning?
- make sure each storage decision meets these goals
- collect up everything that needs a home before starting organizing

LETTING GO OF CLUTTER EXCUSES

- "It was expensive and I can't stand to see it go to waste."
If you don't use it, it's still being wasted -- even if you keep it!
- "I might need it someday."
If you haven't used it in a year, will you use it in the next?
- "It was a gift."
Once you receive a gift, it's yours to do with as you see fit.

STORAGE SOLUTIONS

- create a set home for everything you own -- no halfway spots
- have a good reason for storing an item in a certain place
- store like items together according to purpose
- don't forget accessories and related items
ex: store travel alarm, A/C adapter, and toiletry bag with luggage
- store items nearest the point where you use them
- store items you use most often in more accessible spaces
- store items you use less in harder-to-reach areas
- keep climate in mind -- heat, moisture, and insects
- don't store things in an attic or garage if they will be damaged
- leave 15% of your space free for future additions
- plan to go through your spaces to "purge" once a year



THE RIGHT STORAGE PARAPHERNALIA

- use see-through containers whenever possible
- label every container so you know what's in it without opening
- use drawer dividers, baskets, shelves to subdivide larger spaces
- make use of hanging space with hooks and racks
- make use of low space with under-bed boxes
- choose modular components that can adjust as your needs change

Content provided by [Online Organizing.com](http://OnlineOrganizing.com) —offering “a world of organizing solutions”! Visit www.onlineorganizing.com for organizing products, free tips, a speakers' bureau, a referral for a Professional Organizer near you, or get some help starting and running your own organizing business. Ramona Creel is a Professional Organizer and the founder of OnlineOrganizing.com



FAMILY RECORDS

What to Keep Where and for How Long!

By Debra Pankow, Family Economics Specialist. Ex CDFS NDSU

The easiest way to keep track of your family papers and business records is to set up a filing system. Use NDSU Extension Service circular HE-446, revised "Inventory of Important Family Records," as a guide for what type of records to keep and then as a record of where these records can be found. A simple filing system to separate employment information, credit card information, insurance policies, family health records, warranties and guarantees, education records, bank statements, tax records, and birth, marriage and death certificates. Some records need to be only kept a short time, others for many years. This publication is available on line at NDSU.edu- CDFS publications.