

# How to Cook Ribs in a Slow Cooker

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★★★★★ 88 Recipe Ratings

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If you love tender, juicy ribs but don't want to spend all day standing over a hot grill, make them in the slow cooker. Coat your favorite type of ribs in a dry rub and give them a brief bake in the oven. Cover the ribs with homemade barbecue sauce and place them in the slow cooker. Cook the ribs until they're starting to fall off the bone and serve them. Or give them a quick broil to caramelize the sauce.

## Things You'll Need

- ☐ Measuring cups and spoons
- ☐ Digital scale
- ☐ Knife and cutting board
- ☐ Slow cooker
- ☐ Baking sheet
- ☐ Aluminum foil
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Parchment paper
- ☐ Pastry brush
- ☐ Tongs
- ☐ Oven mitts
- ☐ Slow cooker inserts, optional
- ☐ Grill, optional

## Ingredients

- ☐ 4 pounds (1.8 kg) ribs
- For the dry rub:
  - ☐ 1 1/2 tablespoons (22.5 g) paprika
  - ☐ 1 1/2 tablespoons (22.5 g) packed brown sugar
  - ☐ 2 teaspoons (10 g) salt
  - ☐ 2 teaspoons (10 g) chili powder
  - ☐ 2 teaspoons (10 g) garlic powder
  - ☐ 1 teaspoon (5 g) ground chipotle pepper
  - ☐ 1 teaspoon (5 g) black pepper
  - ☐ 1 teaspoons (5 g) onion powder
  - ☐ 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 g) dried thyme
  - ☐ 1/4 teaspoon (1 g) cayenne pepper, optional
- For the barbecue sauce:
  - ☐ 2 cups (480 g) ketchup
  - ☐ 1/2 cup (170 g) molasses
  - ☐ 1/2 cup (100 g) brown sugar, packed
  - ☐ 1/4 cup (80 g) seedless blackberry preserves
  - ☐ 1/3 cup (80 ml) apple cider vinegar
  - ☐ 1 tablespoon (15 ml) liquid smoke

*Makes 6 to 8 servings*

## Part 1 of 3: Preparing the Ribs, Rub, and Sauce



**1 Remove the rib membrane and preheat the oven.** Turn the oven on to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Get out a baking sheet and lay a piece of parchment paper on it. You'll need to get out four pounds (1.8 kg) of ribs and use your fingers to pull off the tough, white membrane.<sup>[1]</sup>

- You can use spareribs, baby back ribs, rib tips, or country ribs.



**2 Cut and dry the ribs.** Take a sharp knife and carefully cut the ribs into about 6 sections. Rinse the ribs with cool water and use paper towels to pat them dry. Set the ribs on the parchment paper-lined baking sheet.<sup>[2]</sup>

- Cutting the ribs will make them fit into the slow cooker better and make them easier to handle.



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**3 Combine the dry rub.** Get out a small mixing bowl and stir together all of the spice rub ingredients. Take one tablespoon (15 g) of the dry rub and set it aside for the barbecue sauce. For the dry rub, you'll need:<sup>[3]</sup>

- 1 1/2 tablespoons (22.5 g) paprika.
- 1 1/2 tablespoons (22.5 g) packed brown sugar.
- 2 teaspoons (10 g) salt.
- 2 teaspoons (10 g) chili powder.
- 2 teaspoons (10 g) garlic powder.
- 1 teaspoon (5 g) ground chipotle pepper.
- 1 teaspoon (5 g) black pepper.
- 1 teaspoons (5 g) onion powder.
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 g) dried thyme.
- 1/4 teaspoon (1 g) cayenne pepper, optional.



**4 Coat the ribs in the dry rub and bake them for 30 minutes.** Cover the ribs with the dry rub. Use your fingers to ensure that the rub is evenly covering the meat. Place the baking sheet of ribs in the preheated oven and cook them for 15 minutes. Turn the ribs and cook them on the other side for 15 more minutes (for a total of 30 minutes).<sup>[4]</sup>

- Cooking the ribs briefly will seal in the spices.



**5 Cook a simple barbecue sauce.** While you can use store bought barbecue sauce, you can make your own on the stove top. Measure all of the sauce ingredients into a medium saucepan and turn the heat to medium. Stir the sauce every once in a while and cook it for 15 minutes. You'll need to combine:<sup>[5]</sup>

- 2 cups (480 g) ketchup.
- 1/2 cup (170 g) molasses.
- 1 tablespoon (15 g) of the reserved dry rub.
- 1/2 cup (100 g) packed brown sugar.
- 1/4 cup (80 g) seedless blackberry preserves.
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) apple cider vinegar.
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) liquid smoke.



## Part 2 of 3: Slow-Cooking the Ribs



**1 Prepare the slow cooker.** Spray the inside of the slow cooker with nonstick spray. Or you could place a disposable slow cooker insert into the cooker. Spread a little of the barbecue sauce along the bottom of the slow cooker.<sup>[6]</sup>



**2 Arrange the ribs in the slow cooker.** Place the ribs in the slow cooker and spread a little more sauce on top. If you need to, stack another layer of ribs on top and spread more barbecue sauce over them.<sup>[7]</sup>

- The ribs should be evenly covered in the barbecue sauce.



**3 Cook the ribs until they're tender.** Put the lid on the pot and turn it on. Cook the ribs on HIGH for four to five hours or on LOW for seven to nine hours. Turn the ribs about halfway through the cooking time. The ribs' meat should be starting to fall off of the bone once they've finished cooking.[8]

Part  
3

### Part 3 of 3: Finishing the Ribs on the Grill or Under the Broiler



**1 Remove the ribs from the slow cooker.** Lay a sheet of aluminum foil on a baking sheet. Once the meat is tender, use tongs to carefully lift them out of the slow cooker. Place the ribs on the foil and spread a little more barbecue sauce on them.[9]

- Remember that you can always serve the ribs straight from the slow cooker, if you're in a rush.





**2 Broil the ribs for three to five minutes.** Turn on your broiler to low and place the sheet of ribs directly below it. The sauce should also look darker and a little bubbly. Carefully remove the ribs from under the broiler and serve them when they're cool enough to handle.<sup>[10]</sup>



**3 Consider grilling the ribs.** If you'd rather finish the ribs on the grill instead of under the broiler, prepare a hot charcoal or gas grill. Take the ribs on the aluminum foil and wrap them completely in the foil. Place the packet of ribs on the hot grill and grill them for up to five minutes. Serve the ribs immediately.<sup>[11]</sup>

- Keep in mind that the packets will release steam when you open them. Wear oven mitts and use caution.





## 4 Finished.

### References

1. ↑ <http://carlsbadcravings.com/slow-cooker-barbecue-ribs-recipe/>
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### About This Article



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This article was co-authored by wikiHow staff writer, **Jessica Gibson**. Jessica Gibson is a Writer and Editor who's been with wikiHow since 2014. After completing a year of art studies at the Emily Carr University in Vancouver, she graduated from Columbia College with a BA in History. Jessica also completed an MA in History from The University of Oregon in 2013. This article has been viewed 14,034 times.

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