

## Applesauce Microwave Recipe and Apple Tips

by Lee Jackson

What apples make the best applesauce? There are probably as many answers to this question as there are apple lovers. However, the firmer, more tart apples, such as Cortland and Jonathan, make a good combination with lots of flavor. A sweet variety, such as Gala or Jonagold, combined with a tart apple form another good blend. Apples vary greatly in taste and texture. With plenty of apples in the fall, experimenting with different apple varieties can produce an interesting medley of flavors. Other superb varieties for sauce include Braeburn, Granny Smith, Haralson, McIntosh, Newtown Pippin, Wealthy, and Winesap.

Here is a quick and easy basic recipe for **applesauce**, made especially tasty if you are using fresh-off-the tree apples:

6-8 medium apples, peeled, cored, and cut up

1/4 cup water or apple cider

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup brown sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

In 1 1/2 quart glass casserole, combine all ingredients. (If making unsweetened applesauce, omit the sugars.) Microwave on high for 4 to 6 minutes, or until apples are tender. Add a little more water if needed. Since some apples are juicier than others, use

your creativity and good judgment in determining how thick or thin you want the applesauce.

Do you like applesauce smooth or chunky? For a chunky product, mash apples with a fork or potato masher. For a smoother texture, put cooled mixture through a blender or food processor until you have the desired consistency.

Applesauce complements many other foods. For example, add it to meat loaf and bake it in a squash dish. It makes a wonderful accompaniment to roast pork or pork chops. Use it as a topping on French toast, waffles, or pancakes, especially potato pancakes. Applesauce makes a great tasting dessert served warm on gingerbread. Top ice cream with the sauce and sprinkle on a little nutmeg. Small quantities can be frozen and then whipped in blender for a refreshing slushy. If making large quantities, package the applesauce in plastic containers or jars and freeze.

An important advantage of applesauce is that it can be used in place of fat in many recipes. This works well in foods such as quick breads, desserts, and some cakes. For example, in a cake mix recipe, substitute an equal amount of applesauce for the oil called for in the recipe. Then use an equal number of egg whites for the whole eggs stated on the directions. Some recipes require a moderate amount of fat for taste and texture. For those recipes, start by reducing the fat by 1/3 to 1/2 and substituting applesauce for the remainder of the fat. For instance, in an oatmeal cookie recipe, 1 cup of butter or margarine can be reduced to 2/3 cup and add 1/3 cup of applesauce. Replacing fat with applesauce is not recommended for pie crusts and yeast breads.

Apples are packed with fiber, have a low sodium content, can help lower cholesterol and high blood pressure, and are the truly fat-free product of nature. There are many ways to enjoy apples. With a little imagination, you can use versatile applesauce in any number of tempting dishes. Furthermore, it has the added advantage of being a fat substitute in many recipes.

Lee Jackson is the author of two apple cookbooks, **From the Apple Orchard — Recipes for Apple Lovers** and **Apples, Apples Everywhere — Favorite Recipes From America's Orchards**. See more information about these books at [www.imagesunlimitedpub.com](http://www.imagesunlimitedpub.com) or order from the publisher, Images Unlimited Publishing, P.O. Box 305, Maryville, MO 64468. For more information contact: Lee@imagesunlimitedpub.com

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