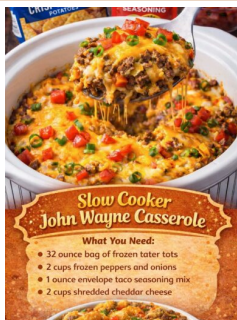


Effortless Tater Tot Taco Bake: Your New Go-To Slow Cooker Meal

Slow Cooker Tater Tot Taco Casserole



OVEN
350°F

TIME
5 min

METHOD
Slow cooker

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

32 oz Frozen Tater Tots: Do not thaw these! Keeping them frozen ensures they don't turn into complete mush during the slow cooking process.

1 lb Ground Beef: I recommend a lean ground beef (90/10) so you don't have to worry about excess grease in the crockpot.

2 cups Frozen Peppers and Onions: A massive time-saver that adds essential aromatics and sweetness.

1 (1 oz) Envelope Taco Seasoning: Your favorite store-bought brand or a homemade blend works great.

2/3 cup Water: To help create that savory taco sauce with the seasoning.

16 oz Sour Cream: This is the secret to the creamy, tangy middle layer.

2 cups Shredded Cheddar Cheese: Divided into two 1-cup portions.

Fresh Toppings: Sliced scallions and diced tomatoes for that burst of fresh color and flavor.

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prep the Cooker:** Lightly spray your slow cooker with non-stick cooking spray (or use a slow cooker liner for even easier cleanup). Spread the frozen tater tots in an even layer across the bottom of the pot.
- 2. Brown the Beef:** In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook the ground beef along with the frozen peppers and onions. Break the meat up with a wooden spoon as it cooks. Once the beef is fully browned and the vegetables are tender, drain any excess grease thoroughly.
- 3. Season It:** Add the taco seasoning and water to the skillet. Stir well and let it simmer for about 5 minutes. You want the liquid to reduce slightly until it forms a thick, flavorful sauce coating the meat.
- 4. Layer the Meat:** Spoon the seasoned beef and vegetable mixture evenly over the frozen tater tots in the slow cooker.
- 5. Make It Creamy:** In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream and 1 cup of the shredded cheddar cheese. Spread this mixture carefully over the meat layer. This acts as a delicious barrier that keeps the beef moist and the tots flavorful.
- 6. Slow Cook:** Cover the pot and cook on LOW for 4 hours. You're looking for the edges to be bubbly and the tots to be hot all the way through.
- 7. Final Cheese Melt:** Remove the lid and sprinkle the remaining 1 cup of cheddar cheese over the top. Cover it back up and let it sit for another 10-15 minutes until the cheese is gooey and perfectly melted.
- 8. Garnish and Serve:** Right before serving, scatter your scallions and diced tomatoes over the top. Serve it

straight from the pot!

SWAPS & NOTES

This recipe works beautifully with ground turkey or chicken. If you want a different flavor profile entirely, you might enjoy this Mexican chicken and rice casserole for your next meal prep session.

The Veggies: If you have fresh bell peppers or onions on hand, feel free to dice them up and use those instead of frozen. You can also add a can of drained black beans or corn to the beef mixture to bulk it up.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Drain the Beef: I can't stress this enough.

If you skip draining the grease, the bottom layer of tater tots will become oily.

Even Layering: Try to spread the meat and sour cream layers all the way to the edges of the slow cooker so every scoop is consistent.

Crispier Top: If you prefer a bit of a crunch, you can carefully transfer the ceramic insert of your slow cooker (if it's oven-safe) to the oven and broil the cheese topping for 3-5 minutes at the end.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/effortless-tater-tot-taco-bake-your-new-go-to-slow-cooker-meal/>