

# MEALTIME HELPER

MAKING MEALTIME EASY

## Sloppy Joes - Recipe

**Prep time:** 10 minutes

**Cook time:** 15–20 minutes

**Total time:** 25–30 minutes

**Servings:** 4–6 (about 6 standard burger-style buns)

## Ingredients

- 1 lb (450 g) ground beef (or ground turkey/chicken for a lighter version)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (optional — for leaner meat)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped (optional)
- 2–3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) ketchup
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar (or maple syrup)
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard (or Dijon)
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) beef or chicken broth (or water)
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika or regular paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 6 hamburger buns (or slider buns), toasted or warmed
- Optional toppings: shredded cheddar, pickles, sliced red onion, coleslaw, chopped parsley

## Directions

1. **Heat the pan:** Warm a large skillet over medium heat. If using lean ground meat, add 1 tablespoon olive oil.
2. **Cook aromatics:** Add the chopped onion (and bell pepper, if using) and sauté 3–4 minutes until softened. Stir in the minced garlic and cook 30–45 seconds until fragrant.

3. **Brown the meat:** Increase heat to medium-high and add the ground beef. Break it up with a spatula and cook until no longer pink and slightly browned, about 5–7 minutes. Drain excess fat if desired, leaving a little for flavor.
4. **Add flavorings:** Stir in the tomato paste and cook 1 minute to deepen flavor. Add ketchup, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, smoked paprika, chili powder (if using), and the broth. Stir to combine.
5. **Simmer:** Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer the mixture 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened and saucy. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, or a splash more Worcestershire or mustard for brightness. If the filling becomes too thick, add a splash of broth; if too thin, simmer a few minutes longer.
6. **Toast buns:** While the Sloppy Joe mixture finishes, toast or warm the buns in a skillet, oven, or toaster until lightly golden.
7. **Assemble:** Spoon generous portions of the meat mixture onto the bottom half of each bun. Top with optional shredded cheese, pickles, or slaw, then the bun top.
8. **Serve:** Serve immediately with chips, fries, or a simple salad. Leftovers keep 3–4 days refrigerated and reheat well on the stove or in the microwave.

## Tips

- For a bit of tang, stir in 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar or a splash of pickle juice at the end.
- Make it ahead: cook the filling, cool, and refrigerate; reheat and serve on fresh buns.
- For a sweeter variation, swap brown sugar for 2 tablespoons maple syrup.

Comforting, messy, and endlessly nostalgic — Sloppy Joes are fast weeknight joy in a bun.