Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 4 hours (Low) or 2.5 hours (High)
Total Time: 4 hours 15 minutes
Servings: 4

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Introduction

There is a reason slow cooker chicken and gravy is a beloved staple in kitchens everywhere: it is the definition of comfort food made effortless. Tender, juicy chicken breasts simmer all day in a rich, savory, herb-infused gravy that practically demands to be spooned over mashed potatoes, rice, or a pile of buttered noodles. The best part? It requires minimal hands-on time, making it perfect for busy weeknights, Sunday suppers, or meal prep.

Chicken breasts have a reputation for drying out, but the gentle, moist environment of a slow cooker locks in moisture and flavor. Combined with a creamy, velvety gravy made from a simple roux and broth, this dish turns an ordinary weeknight dinner into something special. Whether you are a beginner cook or a seasoned pro, this recipe is foolproof, forgiving, and

endlessly adaptable—a true crowd-pleaser that will earn a permanent spot in your rotation.

Ingredients

For the Chicken:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 lbs)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (for searing, optional but recommended)
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

For the Gravy:

- 1 ½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (10.5 oz) can cream of chicken soup (or cream of mushroom)
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon dried rosemary
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning (optional)
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper, to taste

For Finishing:

- ¼ cup heavy cream or whole milk (optional, for richness)

- Fresh chopped parsley, for garnish
- Mashed potatoes, rice, or egg noodles, for serving

Equipment

- 6-quart slow cooker
- Large skillet (if searing)
- Whisk
- Small mixing bowl
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Tongs

Instructions

Phase 1: Prep & Seasoning (Time: 5 Minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. Prep the Chicken: Pat the chicken breasts dry with paper towels. This helps the seasoning adhere and promotes browning.

2. Season: In a small bowl, combine the salt, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, and smoked paprika. Rub the seasoning mixture evenly over both sides of the chicken breasts.

3. Slice the Onion: Thinly slice the yellow onion and mince the garlic. Set aside.

Phase 2: Searing (Optional but Recommended) (Time: 8 Minutes | Intensity: High)

1. Heat the Skillet: Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering.

2. Sear the Chicken: Place the seasoned chicken breasts in the skillet and sear for 3-4 minutes per side until a golden-brown crust forms. The chicken does not need to be cooked through—it will finish cooking in the slow cooker.

3. Transfer: Remove the chicken from the skillet and set aside on a plate.

4. Sauté Aromatics: Reduce the heat to medium and add the sliced onion and minced garlic to the same skillet. Sauté for 2-3 minutes until fragrant and slightly softened, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan.

Note: Searing is optional. If you are short on time, you can skip this step and add the raw

seasoned chicken directly to the slow cooker. The dish will still be delicious, though the gravy will be slightly lighter in color and flavor.

Phase 3: Building the Gravy (Time: 5 Minutes | Intensity: Medium)

1. Make the Roux: In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the melted butter and all-purpose flour until it forms a smooth paste (a roux). This will thicken the gravy.

2. Combine Liquids: In a medium bowl, whisk together the chicken broth, cream of chicken soup, Worcestershire sauce, dried thyme, dried rosemary, and poultry seasoning.

3. Whisk in the Roux: Add the butter-flour roux to the broth mixture and whisk until fully incorporated and smooth. This prevents lumps from forming in the gravy.

Phase 4: Slow Cooking (Time: 4 Hours Low / 2.5 Hours High | Intensity: Low)

1. Layer the Slow Cooker: Place the sautéed onions and garlic in the bottom of the slow cooker. Arrange the seared (or raw) chicken breasts on top.

2. Pour the Gravy: Pour the prepared gravy mixture over the chicken, ensuring the chicken is mostly submerged. Tuck the bay leaf into the liquid.

3. Cook: Cover the slow cooker with the lid. Cook on LOW for 4 hours or on HIGH for 2.5 to 3 hours, until the chicken is cooked through (internal temperature reaches 165°F / 74°C) and fork-tender.

Phase 5: Finishing the Gravy (Time: 5 Minutes | Intensity: Medium)

1. Remove Chicken: Carefully remove the cooked chicken breasts from the slow cooker and transfer them to a serving platter. Tent with foil to keep warm.

2. Remove Bay Leaf: Discard the bay leaf.

3. Thicken (If Needed): If the gravy is too thin, turn the slow cooker to HIGH and let it bubble uncovered for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until it reaches the desired consistency. Alternatively, whisk 1 tablespoon of cornstarch with 2 tablespoons of cold water and stir it into the gravy.

4. Add Cream: For a richer, creamier gravy, stir in the heavy cream or whole milk. Taste and adjust salt and pepper.

5. Serve: Return the chicken to the gravy or slice it and serve it on a platter with the gravy poured over the top. Garnish with fresh chopped parsley.

Flavor Variations

- Mushroom Gravy: Add 1 cup of sliced cremini mushrooms to the skillet when sautéing the onions for an earthy, savory twist.

- Herb-Forward: Increase the thyme and rosemary to 1 ½ teaspoons each and add 1 teaspoon of dried sage for a holiday-style flavor.

- Spicy Kick: Add ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper or a diced jalapeño to the gravy for a little heat.

- Lemon-Dill: Swap the thyme and rosemary for 1 teaspoon of dried dill and add the juice of half a lemon at the end for a bright, fresh variation.

- Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free all-purpose flour for the roux and gluten-free cream of chicken soup.

Nutrition

Note: Nutritional information is an estimate based on standard ingredients and does not include the serving base (mashed potatoes, rice, or noodles).

Serving Size: 1 chicken breast with gravy (about ¼ of recipe)
Calories: 385
Total Fat: 20g
Saturated Fat: 9g
Cholesterol: 125mg
Sodium: 890mg
Total Carbohydrates: 12g
Dietary Fiber: 1g
Sugars: 3g
Protein: 38g