Prep Time: 15 minutes | Cook Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6 | Difficulty: Easy | Intensity Level: Low

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Introduction

There’s something deeply comforting about a pot of vegetable soup simmering on the stove. It’s the kind of meal that warms you from the inside out, fills the kitchen with a savory, herby aroma, and somehow tastes even better the next day. This Veggie Soup recipe is a

celebration of simple, wholesome ingredients—carrots, celery, onions, tomatoes, green beans, and potatoes—all swimming in a rich, flavorful broth.

This soup is wonderfully versatile. It's naturally vegetarian (and easily made vegan), budget-friendly, and a fantastic way to use up whatever vegetables are lingering in your fridge. The base recipe is a classic, but you can swap in zucchini, bell peppers, spinach, or corn with equally delicious results. It's also a meal-prep dream: make a big batch on Sunday and enjoy it for lunches all week, or freeze portions for busy nights when you need something nourishing in minutes.

The intensity level stays low throughout—there's some chopping at the start, a bit of sautéing, and then the pot mostly does the work on its own. In about 45 minutes, you'll have a pot of soup that's hearty enough to be a meal on its own, especially when served with crusty bread or a grilled cheese sandwich. Below you'll find the full ingredient list, step-by-step instructions with timing and intensity levels, tips for success, variations, and complete nutrition information.

Ingredients

For the Soup Base

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and sliced into rounds

- 3 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 medium russet potato, peeled and cubed (about 1½ cups)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (15 oz) cannellini beans or chickpeas, drained and rinsed (optional, for protein)
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt (plus more to taste)

- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (brightens the flavor)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley or basil (for garnish)

Optional Add-Ins

- 1 cup chopped zucchini or yellow squash
- 1 cup chopped bell peppers
- 2 cups fresh spinach or kale (stir in at the end)
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (for heat)

Equipment

- Large soup pot or Dutch oven
- Cutting board and sharp knife

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Ladle

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Prep the Vegetables (Time: 12–15 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Wash and chop all the vegetables: dice the onion, mince the garlic, slice the carrots and celery, cube the potato, and cut the green beans. Having everything ready before you start cooking makes the process smooth and stress-free.

Step 2: Sauté the Aromatics (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low–Moderate)

Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Add the diced onion and cook for 3–4 minutes until softened and translucent. Add the minced garlic and cook for another 30–60 seconds until fragrant—be careful not to burn the garlic.

Step 3: Build the Flavor Base (Time: 3–4 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Stir in the tomato paste, dried thyme, oregano, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper. Cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring constantly, until the tomato paste darkens slightly and coats the

vegetables. This step deepens the flavor of the broth.

Step 4: Add the Hearty Vegetables and Broth (Time: 3 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Add the carrots, celery, potato, green beans, diced tomatoes, cannellini beans (if using), and bay leaves. Pour in the vegetable broth and stir to combine, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot.

Step 5: Simmer the Soup (Time: 20–25 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Bring the soup to a boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 20–25 minutes, or until the potatoes and carrots are fork-tender. Stir occasionally to ensure even cooking.

Step 6: Add the Quick-Cooking Vegetables (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Stir in the frozen corn, frozen peas, and any optional quick-cooking vegetables like zucchini or spinach. Simmer uncovered for another 5 minutes until heated through and the greens are wilted.

Step 7: Finish and Serve (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Remove the bay leaves. Stir in the lemon juice and taste, adjusting salt and pepper as needed. Ladle into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley or basil. Serve hot with crusty bread if desired.

Recipe Timing Summary

Stage	Time	Intensity
Prep vegetables	12–15 min	Low
Sauté aromatics	5 min	Low–Moderate
Build flavor base	3–4 min	Low
Add vegetables and broth	3 min	Low
Simmer	20–25 min	Low
Add quick-cooking vegetables	5 min	Low
Finish and serve	2 min	Low
Total	~45 minutes	Low

Tips for Success

- Cut vegetables evenly. Uniform pieces cook at the same rate, so nothing turns mushy while something else stays crunchy.

- Layer the flavors. Sautéing the tomato paste and spices before adding the broth creates a deeper, richer taste.

- Add delicate vegetables last. Corn, peas, and spinach only need a few minutes—adding them too early makes them mushy.

- Use homemade or high-quality broth. The broth is the backbone of the soup, so choose one you love the taste of.

- Don’t overcook the potatoes. Check them at the 20-minute mark—they should be tender but not falling apart.

- Make it ahead. This soup tastes even better the next day and freezes beautifully for up to 3 months.

- Adjust the consistency. Add more broth for a brothy soup or mash some of the potatoes against the side of the pot to thicken it naturally.

Variations

- Minestrone-Style: Add 1 cup of small pasta (like ditalini) during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

- Creamy Veggie Soup: Blend half the soup with an immersion blender, then stir it back into the pot for a creamy texture without added cream.

- Spicy Veggie Soup: Add ¼ teaspoon of red pepper flakes or a diced jalapeño with the aromatics.

- Protein-Packed: Add a can of drained chickpeas or white beans, or stir in shredded chicken at the end.

- Slow Cooker Version: Combine all ingredients except the frozen vegetables and lemon juice in a slow cooker and cook on LOW for 6–7 hours, adding the frozen vegetables in the last 15 minutes.

- Instant Pot Version: Sauté the aromatics using the sauté function, add the remaining

ingredients (except frozen vegetables and lemon juice), and pressure cook on HIGH for 5 minutes with a 5-minute natural release.

Nutrition Information (Per Serving)

Approximate values based on 6 servings, including the cannellini beans but without optional add-ins.

- Calories: 180 kcal
- Protein: 6 g
- Carbohydrates: 28 g
- Dietary Fiber: 6 g
- Sugars: 7 g
- Fat: 5 g
- Saturated Fat: 1 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg

- Sodium: 680 mg
- Potassium: 700 mg