8 Budget Slow Cooker Meals for Cold Nights

Six feed a family of 4 for under $8 | HomemadeRecipes.com

Use 1/3 less liquid than stovetop recipes. Add acid (lime or vinegar) at the finish. Costs are estimates, Nov 2026.

1 Salsa Verde Chicken

~$7.00 total, ~$1.75/serving | 6-7 hrs low
Thighs, jarred salsa verde, cumin, garlic powder, lime. Tacos or rice.

2 Honey Garlic Chicken Thighs

~$4.60 total, ~$1.15/serving | 6-7 hrs low
Thighs, soy sauce, honey, garlic powder, cider vinegar. Rice or noodles.

3 Slow Cooker Carnitas

~$6.30 total, ~$1.60/serving | 8 hrs low
Pork shoulder, orange juice, lime, cumin, garlic powder, oregano. Tacos.

4 Beef and Broccoli

~$15.50 total, ~$3.90/serving (stretch ~$11.80) | 6-7 hrs low
Beef chuck, soy sauce, brown sugar, garlic, ginger, frozen broccoli. Rice.

5 BBQ Chicken Thighs

~$5.10 total, ~$1.30/serving | 6 hrs low
Thighs, ketchup, cider vinegar, brown sugar, smoked paprika. Baked potatoes.

6 Black Bean and Corn Chicken

~$7.10 total, ~$1.80/serving | 6-7 hrs low
Boneless thighs, black beans, frozen corn, salsa, cumin, lime. Rice bowls.

7 Beef Chuck Pot Roast

~$15.50 total, ~$3.90/serving (stretch ~$11.90) | 8-9 hrs low
Beef chuck, carrots, potatoes, beef broth, Worcestershire.

8 Chickpea and Spinach Curry

~$4.50 total, ~$1.15/serving | 6-7 hrs low
Chickpeas, tomatoes, frozen spinach, curry powder, coconut milk. Rice.

5-condiment shelf

Soy sauce, tomato paste, smoked paprika, apple cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce.

Freezer kit method

Bag raw ingredients in gallon freezer bags, flat and single-layer until solid. Keep up to 3 months.
Thaw in the fridge a full day before cooking. Do not put frozen meat in a slow cooker (USDA).

Full recipes and cost notes: homemaderecipes.com/budget-slow-cooker-meals. Chuck priced at the Sept 2026 BLS U.S. average of $9.19/lb.