

BARBECUED BRISKET

Serves 6 to 8

Cooking time: 6 to 8 hours on LOW, 4 to 5 hours on HIGH (10 minutes active)

Even the most sleep-deprived parent can toss three ingredients into a slow cooker, right? That's all this recipe calls for, and holy cow is it delicious. It's not at all what you'd get if you lived in Texas, where brisket receives the day-long smoking treatment, but on a weeknight it's darn near life-changing. I serve this with baked beans (either canned or, if I have time, I'll make Rick Bayless's recipe for Hickory House Baked Beans, on [Saveur.com](#)) and cornbread.

A nice big brisket will give you enough meat for sandwiches the next day. It also freezes well, submerged in the cooking sauce.

NOTE: If you're using store-bought barbecue sauce, which I often do in this recipe, please read the labels carefully. Buy a bottle whose ingredients you can pronounce, ingredients that you would use if you were making it yourself.

- 1 3- to 4-pound brisket, trimmed of as much fat as possible
- 1 cup apple juice
- 1 cup barbecue sauce, either homemade or store-bought

1. Put the brisket into the slow cooker (cut it in half across the grain if it won't lie flat). Pour the barbecue sauce and apple juice on top, making sure some of the liquid winds up underneath the meat: the meat should not be fully submerged.
2. Cook on LOW for 6 to 8 hours, or on HIGH for 4 to 5 hours. It's done when a fork pierces it easily. If you feel any resistance, cook for 30 minutes longer on HIGH.

MAKE IT IN THE OVEN: Set the oven to 200°F, and use a Dutch oven. It should take between 6 and 8 hours, but check after 5 to be safe. Do not leave home while the oven is on.

MAKE BABY FOOD: This is tender enough to cut with a fork, so it's great for finger food. But some babies aren't fond of the texture of meat—if yours is one of them, puree it along with some of the sauce.

MAMA SAID

“This is, hands down, the easiest brisket I have *ever* made (and we eat a lot of brisket in this house!). I was planning on eating it tomorrow, but when I went to slice the meat and store it in the fridge, my husband said, ‘You’re putting that away without letting me taste it?’ and so the two of us proceeded to shovel the meat into our mouths at 9:30 at night standing over the kitchen counter. It was romance at its best.” —Jesse Z., mom of two, Los Angeles, CA

