

## Pumpkin and Black Bean Chili

1 cup dry black beans, soaked overnight in cold water  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 garlic clove, minced \*  
1 lb ground beef  
1/2 pumpkin (a pie-type of pumpkin), seeded, peeled, and cut into 1" cubes  
1 can (500mL) tomatoes, undrained (home-made)  
2 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp dried oregano  
1/4 tsp dried rosemary  
1/4 tsp dried thyme  
1/4 tsp chili pepper flakes  
1 tsp salt  
2 heaped Tablespoons brown sugar

The night before, put the beans in the slow-cooker and cover them with water. Make sure there is at least one inch (1") of water above the beans which will give them space to swell.

The next morning, plug in the slow-cooker and turn it on the highest setting.

While that heats up the water and beans, fry up the meat in a pan. Then put that into the slow cooker with the beans.

Using the same pan, fry up the onions. (Ground beef has a little bit of fat in it, so I didn't use oil to fry the onions.) Once the onions are almost translucent, add the garlic. Don't fry the garlic too long or it will burn. Cook it just a little bit - maybe a minute or two - then add it to the slow-cooker as well.

Chop up the pumpkin and add that to the slow-cooker. Now walk away and let it cook quietly alone.

*NOTE: Every slow cooker is different so you might have to turn yours down to a lower setting (not the keep warm setting though) if necessary. Mine is fine on high all day until supper time.*

At home at lunch: If you are at home at lunch time, add the tomatoes, spices, and herbs. Also give the chili a stir. The pumpkin bits should be easy to mash with a

spoon. Just bring one over to the edge of the pot and squish it with the back of the spoon. If the chili looks a bit too thick, add some boiling water as well.

Not at home at lunch: But if you only get home at supper, just add everything in the morning and let it cook until you get home. If the chili looks a bit too thick, add some boiling water before serving.