

Cook in Bag* versus the traditional One-Pot Meal* cook style

* Cook in Bag sold by various camp food suppliers

* One-Pot Meal sold by Outdoor Herbivore

	Cook In Bag	One Pot Meals
Type of Packaging Material *	Plastic, Gusseted. 5+ millimeter resealable poly bag FDA approved for food contact & boiling water.	Plastic, Non-Gusseted. 2 millimeter resealable poly bag FDA approved for food contact.
Packability	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space is not utilized as efficiently. Bag is standard sized to fit the volume of each meal plus the addition of water. The horizontal volume is consumed more than the vertical space since the bags are vacuumed and gusseted. This makes it more cumbersome to fit into small areas. The density of the bags creates sharp corners making it a concern for equipment that can be torn easily. 	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space is better utilized because the bags are sized to fit the volume of the meal portion. Bags are not gusseted and do not have sharp corners. They can easily slide within small spaces.
Weight	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standard sized labeled cook bag weighs .4 - .5 oz Consider the collective weight across the group, each carrying their own individual cook in meal bags. 	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A standard sized labeled product bag weighs .1 - .2 oz
Portion Control	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can not cook the exact portions you want. Once the water is poured into the bag, the meal is complete. Convenient when cooking solo, but can not be shared among multiple individuals. 	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can cook the exact portions you want. Convenient when cooking solo or in groups.
Group Flexibility	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals are individualized allowing each person to eat to their desired taste preferences. 	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group shares a single dish. Each person may not desire the same dish.

* Plastic - Unfortunately, plastic is used for packaging because it is one of the few materials approved for selling packaged foods for resisting water damage & transport. Plastic bags are made from polymers, which are formed from ethylene, a gas produced as a by-product of oil, gas and coal production. The plastic pellets, also known as polyethylene or polythene, is used by plastic manufacturers to produce multiple items, including plastic bags. Technology is starting to catch up with the need for a replacement for polythene bags.

Continued - Cook in Bag* versus the traditional One-Pot Meal* cook style

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	Cook In Bag	One Pot Meals
Equipment	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel, Stove, and Pot required to boil the water. Addition of an optional “cozy” to keep the food hot while hydrating. 	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel, Stove, and Pot required to boil the water.
Fuel Use	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enough to bring water to a boil only. 	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enough to bring water to a boil and possibly simmer product.
Preparation	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boil water, pour into bag and wait. 	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boil water, pour ingredients into cook pot, and monitor the cooking. Some products may require stirring or simmering.
Cook Time	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boil time plus a 5-20 minute wait for hydration. 	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boil time plus a simmer time up to 3 minutes. Our slowest product is ready to eat within 15 minute hydration time.
Ingredient Quality	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted to more freeze-dried ingredients and highly processed, enriched pastas, rices, and grains to allow for no actual cooking. This type of processing typically requires preservatives, including higher sodium content. 	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose grains that naturally have fast cook times or do not undergo mass processing in order to be available. Can opt for freeze dried or dehydrated.
Pot Clean Up	 No <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanup is eliminated since only water is boiled in the pan. 	 Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small amount of water for cleanup is required (see cleaning tips if you do not have a non-stick pot).
Cost: Waste to Environment	 More <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Packaged in larger, denser plastic bag, requiring more time to biodegrade. 	 Less <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Packaged in smaller, less dense plastic bag requiring less time to biodegrade.
Cost: Production to Environment	 The incredibly slow rate of decay of plastic bags also means that each bag used compounds the problem, because the bags simply accumulate. We hope to have alternative packaging available in the future.	
Total Score:	 4/12	 7/12