

Mr. Coffee is the new microwave
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By Rick Snee

Heya, Questheads. If you are reading this, that means you have reached a lull in your busy schedule of trying to hook up with each other, ditching your parents or undiscovering the Dalton Dash. If it's the Dash, then don't worry: eventually we all develop intestines of steel. In the meantime, a human being cannot live on Au Bon Pain alone. (Meal plans last all of a month at ABP.)

Dorm life, however, puts a damper on cooking. There are only two stoves in most buildings, and only ritzy dorms allow microwaves.

So, microwaves are verboten—so what? This is college, and we eat Ramen. It is cheap, delicious and maybe—but don't quote me on this—nutritious. For 10 cents per bag, it will economize budgets and bathroom time. It can also be prepared in a standard coffeemaker.

Coffeemakers are a-OK in the dorms, and they are not just for coffee anymore. During a routine moneyless period, I found myself with neither a pot of boil water nor a measuring cup. It was just me, a bag of Ramen and Mr. Coffee. If necessity is the mother of invention, then call me Mom, because I am going to prove that microwaves and ovens are for nacies.

First, make sure your coffeepot holds at least two cups of water. If not, there is a pawn shop right on Main Street, just past Mi Puerto, which has Mariachi Night every Tuesday and Thursday. The pawn shop is also handy for quick cash when it's too early to sell books back.

Go ahead and send the water through without a filter. This will wash out the old grinds, which date back to your last all-nighter pulled to fudge a paper.

Once the now-heated water has settled, ass the noodles to the pot. I break mine up in the bag beforehand to prevent excess slurpage. Let this sit on the warmer plate for three minutes, stirring occasionally.

When three minutes are up, pour the Ramen into your bowl of choice and add seasoning. My Ramen bowl features Ninja Turtles, but don't think yours has to as well. After all, a Ramen bowl is a window into one's soul, and I am definitely a Ninja Turtle.

This method will also work for Easy Mac, but I would avoid canned soups; Mr. Coffee cannot pass lentil beans. I also discovered an unexpected perk: when cleaning the pot, the noodles remove all of those stubborn, old coffee stains. Expect to see my infomercial soon.

Another option is the standard iron and a bread dish. This tip comes from an undisclosed source I have codenamed "The Iron Chef." TIC recommends flipping the iron upside down in the dish, then wrapping it in tin foil for easy cleaning. This improvised stovetop can cook burgers, grilled cheese and even boil your water for Ramen.

TIC also offers a disclaimer. "Cooking with an iron is not an approved use of the iron. I doubt it is at all safe. Any cooking, no matter the appliance being used, should be supervised at all times. Yes, that includes microwave popcorn."

Now, why would anyone use these ideas? I'll give you two reasons: 1) women's lib, and 2) don't be a sissy. The women's rights movement fought hard to make sure college-educated ladies (and gentlemen) did not bend over stoves. To not use Mr. (or Ms.) Coffee for Ramen would be a grave insult to the Spirit of '69. Plus, anyone can cook with a microwave—it's in the directions for Pete's sake. Don't be a nancy.

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