

**Basic Bean Soup**

1 package dried bean mix  
 8 cups water  
 1 package spice mix  
 1 smoked ham hock (about 1/2 pound) (optional)  
 1 cup chopped onion  
 1 12 oz. can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, undrained

To prepare the soup, place bean mix in a large Dutch oven. Cover with water to 2 inches above beans; cover and let stand 8 hours. Drain.

Combine the drained bean mixture, 8 cups water, and the ham hock in a large Dutch oven; bring to a boil. Add 1 packet spice mix, onion, and tomatoes. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 2 hours. Uncover; cook 1 hour. Discard bay leaf. Remove ham hock from soup. Remove meat from bone; shred meat with 2 forks. Return meat to soup.

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