

Sous Vide Sausage Technique

Here's a neat way to produce properly-cooked sausages without risking rendering the fat by exceeding 170 degF. The technique uses sous vide (water bath) equipment to maintain enough time at temperature to kill trichinae.

1. Set your precision cooker to the desired temperature between 140°F / 60°C and 160°F / 71°C according to your preferred finishing texture, illustrated below (for later freezing, suggest 45 minutes at 160°F).
2. Place the sausages inside a vacuum sealing bag in a single layer.
3. Seal the bag, making sure to stop the vacuum sealer and seal the bags immediately after the air has been removed—do not let the sausages get squeezed. Alternatively, use the water displacement method: seal a zipper-lock bag almost all the way up, then gently lower it into a large pot of water, sealing off the bag just before the top is fully submerged.
4. Add the sausages to the water bath and cook for at least 45 minutes and up to 4 hours.
5. If not freezing, remove the sausages from the bag and discard juices. Dry sausages carefully on a paper towel-lined plate. To finish cooking, grill, pan-fry, or use other means. Otherwise, vacuum pack your sausages and freeze them for a later date.

Preferred temperatures are as follows:

Sausage Temps and Times		
Based on J. Kenji Lopez-Alt, http://www.seriousseats.com/recipes/2016/02/sous-vide-beer-brat-recipe-food-lab.html		
Description	Temperature	Timing
Extra juicy compared to traditional cooking, but with a softness that some might find borders on too soft.	140°F (60°C)	45 minutes to 4 hours
Fully firm and extra juicy, with a very smooth texture throughout.	150°F (66°C)	45 minutes to 4 hours
Nearly traditional texture—springy and juicy, quite firm, but starting to show a difference in texture between fat and lean areas, with the latter starting to turn a little loose and crumbly.	160°F (71°C)	45 minutes to 4 hours