

PASTA COOKING TIPS

General Pasta Cooking Tips:

- ✓ Use only small amounts of vegetable oils, margarine and vegetable cooking spray when preparing pasta dishes.
- ✓ Keep leftover cooked pasta in the refrigerator for up to three days. When it's time to reheat, simply put it in a colander and then place it directly into boiling water for one minute.
- ✓ Instead of meat, try adding vegetables to a light tomato sauce for a nutritious option with plenty of flavor and crunch.
- ✓ Add leftover pasta to your favorite soup. If you use dry pasta, simmer the soup for an additional 5 to 10 minutes or until the pasta is cooked.
- ✓ Make mealtime more enjoyable by serving different, fun shapes – stars, letters, wheels and the all-time kid favorite ... spaghetti. Introduce young pasta eaters to finger-friendly sizes like ziti, rotini (spirals), and radiatore (radiators).
- ✓ Save time with pasta leftovers – double your favorite recipes, and freeze the extra servings for later use.



How To Cook Pasta Perfectly Every Time:

1. Boil 4 to 6 quarts of water for each pound of dry pasta.
(You can divide this recipe depending on how much pasta you are cooking).
To add flavor and reduce stickiness, add salt to boiling water.
2. Add the pasta with a stir and return the water to a boil.
3. Stir the pasta occasionally during cooking.
4. Follow the package directions for cooking times. If the pasta is to be used as part of a dish that requires further cooking, undercook the pasta by 1/3 of the cooking time specified on the package.
5. Taste the pasta to determine if it is done. Perfectly cooked pasta should be “al dente,” or firm to the bite, yet cooked through.
6. Drain pasta immediately and follow the rest of the recipe.



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Tips for Low-Sodium Cooking:

- ✓ Flavor with spices, herbs or lemon juice rather than salt.
- ✓ Choose pasta partners with potassium, such as white beans, dark, leafy greens or salmon – they may help to counter some of sodium's harmful effects on blood pressure.
- ✓ Use fresh fruits and vegetables.

Tips on Portion Sizes and Uncooked to Cooked Pasta Measurements:



- For short pastas and egg noodles, like elbow macaroni, shells, spirals, wagon wheels, ziti, etc., 2 ounces uncooked is roughly equal to ½ cup dry and about 1 cup cooked (Larger, bulkier shapes such as bowties, penne rigate, rigatoni, and wide noodles may yield more, while smaller shapes such as stars or alphabets may yield less). For long pastas, such as spaghetti, angel hair, vermicelli, linguine, etc., 2 ounces uncooked equals ½ inch bunch dry and 1 cup cooked.
- To make a single portion of pasta use approximately ½ cup dry pasta or measure ½ inch diameter of dry long pasta (1 cup or 2 grain servings cooked). A single portion of sauce is ½ cup as well. For fast meals – freeze ½ cup portions of sauce, defrost, and add to any dish.

