



Classic Baked Macaroni and Cheese

Give up the box mix because making Classic Baked Macaroni and Cheese from scratch is easier than you think. Shredding a block of cheese adds a little more prep time but the smooth and creamy results are worth it. For more tasty mac and cheese recipes, see our complete [Macaroni and Cheese recipe](#) collection.)

Photo by: Photo: Becky Luigart-Stayner; Styling: Jan Gautro, Laura Martin

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Yield: Makes 2 to 3 main-dish or 4 to 6 side-dish servings

Ingredients

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| 1 (8-oz.) package elbow macaroni | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 2 tablespoons butter | 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper |
| 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour | 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper |
| 2 cups milk | 1 (8-oz.) block sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded and divided |

Preparation

1. Prepare pasta according to package directions. Keep warm.
2. Melt butter in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-low heat; whisk in flour until smooth. Cook, whisking constantly, 2 minutes. Gradually whisk in milk, and cook, whisking constantly, 5 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in salt, black and red pepper, 1 cup shredded cheese, and cooked pasta.
3. Spoon pasta mixture into a lightly greased 2-qt. baking dish; top with remaining 1 cup cheese.
4. Bake at 400° for 20 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Note: For testing purposes only, we used Kraft Sharp Cheddar Cheese. To lighten, 2% reduced-fat milk and reduced-fat cheese may be substituted.

One-Pot Macaroni and Cheese: Prepare recipe as directed, stirring all grated Cheddar cheese into thickened milk mixture until melted. Add cooked pasta, and serve immediately. Prep: 10 min., Cook: 7 min.

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