

## This Tuna Macaroni Salad Is My Favorite Cool and Creamy Side

Some dishes are timeless for a reason, and



**PRINT**  
**Recipe Card**

**SAVE**  
**PDF**

**SOURCE**  
**ChefManiac**

**BINDER**  
**Ready**

### INGREDIENTS

2 cups elbow macaroni, cooked and cooled

1 (12 oz) can tuna, drained

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise (or more to taste)

... cup sour cream

1 stalk celery, diced

... cup red or sweet onion, finely chopped

1 tbsp sweet relish (optional)

Salt & pepper, to taste

Optional add-ins: chopped hard-boiled eggs, green peas, shredded cheddar cheese

Ingredient Tips & Swaps:

Mayonnaise Base: Lighten it up with Greek yogurt or add Dijon for extra tang.

Sour Cream Swap: Try plain Greek yogurt for a protein boost.

No Tuna? Use canned chicken or chickpeas for a twist.

Eggs & Cheddar: Both add protein and richness-great for turning this into a full meal.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

Cook PastaBoil elbow macaroni according to package instructions. Rinse under cold water to stop cooking and drain well.

Mix the DressingIn a large bowl, stir together mayonnaise, sour cream, salt, pepper, and sweet relish (if using).

Combine SaladAdd cooled macaroni, tuna, celery, and

onion to the bowl. Gently fold until well mixed and coated.

**Taste & Adjust**Add more mayo, salt, or relish as needed for your desired flavor and texture.

**Chill & Serve**Refrigerate for at least 1 hour to let the flavors come together. Serve cold and garnish with parsley or paprika if desired.

**Tips for Success:**

**Rinse the noodles well:** This stops the cooking and prevents clumping.

**Use tuna in water** for a lighter flavor, or oil-packed for richness.

**Chill time is key:** It lets the dressing soak into the pasta for max flavor.

**Double the recipe** for meal prep-this salad holds up beautifully in the fridge.

**Serving Suggestions & Pairings:**

A tall glass of **Blueberry Lemonade** for a refreshing drink that complements the creamy salad.

**Crunchy crackers** or buttery croissants on the side.

These **Easy Turkey Wings** for a warm, savory counterpoint.

This **Big Family Banana Pudding** to round out the meal with a sweet, nostalgic finish.

For a simple dessert, enjoy **These Chocolate Chip Cookie Bites**.

**Storage & Leftovers:**

**Refrigerate:** Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

**Do Not Freeze:** Mayonnaise-based salads don't freeze well.

**Refresh** with a Spoonful of Mayo before serving if it thickens in the fridge.

## DIRECTIONS

- 1.** **Cook :** PastaBoil elbow macaroni according to package instructions. Rinse under cold water to stop cooking and drain well.
- 2.** **Mix the :** DressingIn a large bowl, stir together mayonnaise, sour cream, salt, pepper, and sweet relish (if using).
- 3.** **Combine :** SaladAdd cooled macaroni, tuna, celery, and onion to the bowl. Gently fold until well mixed and coated.
- 4.** **Taste & :** AdjustAdd more mayo, salt, or relish as needed for your desired flavor and texture.
- 5.** **Chill & :** ServeRefrigerate for at least 1 hour to let the flavors come together. Serve cold and garnish with parsley or paprika if desired.
- 6.** **Tips for Success:** Rinse the noodles well: This stops the cooking and prevents clumping.
- 7.** **Use tuna in water** for a lighter flavor, or oil-packed for richness.
- 8.** **Chill time is key:** It lets the dressing soak into the pasta for max flavor.
- 9.** **Double the recipe** for meal prep-this salad holds up beautifully in the fridge.
- 10.** **Serving Suggestions & Pairings:** Serve this salad as a standalone lunch, picnic side, or part of a casual summer dinner. Try pairing with:
- 11.** A tall glass of : **Blueberry Lemonade** for a refreshing drink that complements the creamy salad.
- 12.** **Crunchy crackers** or buttery croissants on the side.
- 13.** **These :** **Easy Turkey Wings** for a warm, savory counterpoint.

14. This : Big Family Banana Pudding to round out the meal with a sweet, nostalgic finish.
15. For a simple dessert, enjoy : These Chocolate Chip Cookie Bites.
16. Storage & Leftovers: Refrigerate: Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.
17. Do Not : Freeze: Mayonnaise-based salads don't freeze well.
18. Refresh with a : Spoonful of Mayo before serving if it thickens in the fridge.
19. More Recipes You'll Love: A Light, Tangy Chicken Salad I Actually Crave (And There's No Mayo in Sight)
20. These : Easy Turkey Wings Are My Favorite Comfort Food for Lazy Sundays
21. This : Blueberry Lemonade Is My Favorite Refreshing Drink for Sunny Days
22. These : Chocolate Chip Cookie Bites Are My Favorite Little Treat to Bake Anytime
23. This : Big Family Banana Pudding Is My Favorite Classic Dessert to Feed a Crowd
24. Final Thoughts: This Tuna Macaroni Salad is one of those recipes that sticks with you-simple, satisfying, and deeply comforting. Whether you're packing lunch for the week, planning a picnic, or just craving something cold and creamy, this dish always delivers.
25. Tried it? Let us know how you made it your own! And follow ChefManiac for more tried-and-true classics, cool twists, and everyday kitchen inspiration.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Rinse the noodles well : This stops the cooking and prevents clumping.

Use tuna in water for a lighter flavor, or oil-packed for richness.

Chill time is key : It lets the dressing soak into the pasta for max flavor.

Double the recipe for meal prep-this salad holds up beautifully in the fridge.

**More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)**

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/this-tuna-macaroni-salad-is-my-favorite-cool-and-creamy-side/>