

## This Five Cheese Mac Bake Is My Favorite Comfort Food Crowd-Pleaser

Five Cheese Crack and Cheese



**OVEN**  
**350°F**

**TIME**  
**30 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

1 pound elbow macaroni  
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
1 cup shredded gouda cheese  
1 cup grated parmesan cheese  
1 cup cream cheese, softened  
1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups milk  
... cup butter

1 tsp garlic powder

Salt and pepper, to taste

Optional Swaps and Add-Ins:

Cheese Substitutions: Try Fontina, Havarti, or Colby Jack based on what's on hand.

Add-ins: Mix in cooked chicken, roasted vegetables, or jalapeños for a spicy twist.

Lighter Version: Use light cream cheese and skim milk (though it may affect creaminess).

Instructions:

1. Preheat and Prep:

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).

Lightly grease a baking dish.

2. Cook the Pasta:

Boil macaroni to al dente per package directions.

Drain and set aside.

3. Make the Cheese Sauce:

In a large pot over medium heat, melt butter.

Add cream cheese and milk, whisk until smooth and creamy.

Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper.

4. Combine:

Stir in cooked macaroni to coat evenly in the sauce.

Add cheddar, mozzarella, gouda, and parmesan.

Stir until fully melted and blended.

5. Bake:

Spoon the cheesy pasta into prepared baking dish.

Bake uncovered for 25-30 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.

6. Serve:

Let cool a few minutes before digging in. Serve hot and melty!

Tips for Success:

## DIRECTIONS

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2. Lightly grease a baking dish.
3. Cook the Pasta: Boil macaroni to al dente per package directions.
4. Drain and set aside.
5. Make the Cheese Sauce: In a large pot over medium heat, melt butter.
6. Add cream cheese and milk, whisk until smooth and creamy.
7. Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper.
8. Combine: Stir in cooked macaroni to coat evenly in the sauce.
9. Add cheddar, mozzarella, gouda, and parmesan.
10. Stir until fully melted and blended.
11. Bake: Spoon the cheesy pasta into prepared baking dish.
12. Bake uncovered for 25-30 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.
13. Serve: Let cool a few minutes before digging in. Serve hot and melty!
14. Tips for Success: Shred your own cheese for the smoothest melt-pre-shredded cheese can be grainy.
15. Don't overbake-just until golden on top. Overbaking dries it out.
16. Use room-temp cream cheese for faster melting and smoother sauce.
17. Serving Suggestions and Pairings: This pasta bake is bold enough to stand alone or serve as a crowd-friendly side. Pair with:

18. Beer : Cheese Dip for a starter that matches the theme
19. Cheesy : Sandwich Dip to build a cheese lover's buffet
20. Sheet : Pan Quesadillas for a fun, shareable spread
21. A fresh salad or roasted veggies to balance the richness
22. Make-Ahead and Leftovers: Make-Ahead: Assemble and refrigerate up to 24 hours before baking.
23. Fridge: Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to 3 days.
24. Reheat: Add a splash of milk, cover with foil, and reheat at 300°F until warmed through.
25. More Recipes You'll Love: Can't get enough cheesy comfort? Try these favorites:

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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Use room-temp cream cheese for faster melting and smoother sauce.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/this-five-cheese-mac-bake-is-my-favorite-comfort-food-crowd-pleaser/>