

## Cold Pasta Salad with Veggies, Cheese, and Ham: A Refreshing & Hearty Dish

light, refreshing, and satisfying dish



**TIME**  
**15 min**

**PRINT**  
**Recipe Card**

**SAVE**  
**PDF**

**SOURCE**  
**ChefManiac**

### INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces pasta (rotini, bowtie, or penne)
- 1 cup diced ham
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese (or cubed)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cucumber, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup bell peppers, diced (red, yellow, or green)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup red onion, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup black olives, sliced (optional)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh parsley or basil, chopped (optional)

For the Dressing:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise (or Greek yogurt for a lighter option)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice)
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon black pepper

How to Make Cold Pasta Salad with Veggies, Cheese, and Ham:

1. Cook the Pasta:
2. Prepare the Dressing:
3. Assemble the Salad:
4. Toss with Dressing:
5. Chill and Serve:

My Best Tips for the Perfect Pasta Salad:

Rinse the pasta with cold water - This stops the cooking process and keeps it from sticking.

Use high-quality cheese and ham - Freshly shredded cheese and thick-cut ham add extra flavor.

Chill before serving - This helps the flavors blend beautifully.

Add crunch - Try tossing in sunflower seeds, nuts, or croutons.

What to Serve with Cold Pasta Salad:

Grilled chicken or steak - A protein-packed meal.

Fresh bread or garlic toast - Perfect for soaking up the dressing.

A side of fruit - A refreshing contrast.

Lemonade or iced tea - A light, summery drink pairing.

FAQs:

## DIRECTIONS

1. **Cook the Pasta:** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta according to package instructions until al dente. Drain, rinse under cold water, and set aside.
2. **Prepare the Dressing:** In a small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, sour cream, Dijon mustard, vinegar, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper until smooth.
3. **Assemble the Salad:** In a large bowl, combine the cooked pasta, ham, cheese, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, bell peppers, red onion, and black olives.
4. **Toss with Dressing:** Pour the dressing over the salad and toss until everything is evenly coated.
5. **Chill and Serve:** Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving to let the flavors meld. Garnish with fresh herbs and serve chilled!
6. **My Best Tips for the Perfect Pasta Salad:** Rinse the pasta with cold water - This stops the cooking process and keeps it from sticking.
7. **Use high-quality cheese and ham -** Freshly shredded cheese and thick-cut ham add extra flavor.
8. **Chill before serving -** This helps the flavors blend beautifully.
9. **Add crunch -** Try tossing in sunflower seeds, nuts, or croutons.
10. **What to Serve with Cold Pasta Salad:** This pasta salad is delicious on its own, but here are some great pairings:
11. **Grilled chicken or steak -** A protein-packed meal.
12. **Fresh bread or garlic toast -** Perfect for soaking up the dressing.

13. A side of fruit - A refreshing contrast.
14. Lemonade or iced tea - A light, summery drink pairing.
15. FAQs: Can I make this pasta salad ahead of time? Yes! It tastes even better after a few hours in the fridge. Just give it a quick stir before serving.
16. How do I store leftovers? Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days.
17. Can I make this gluten-free? Absolutely! Just use your favorite gluten-free pasta.
18. This : Cold Pasta Salad with Veggies, Cheese, and Ham is easy, refreshing, and full of flavor, making it a perfect dish for meal prep, summer cookouts, or quick lunches. Give it a try and let me know how it turns out!

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/cold-pasta-salad-with-veggies-cheese-and-ham-a-refreshing-hearty-dish/>