

Mac & Cheese Crockpot: Creamy Comfort Food Made Easy

The Evolution of Mac & Cheese and the Crockpot



TIME
30-45 min

METHOD
Slow cooker

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb elbow macaroni, uncooked
- 1 (12 ounce) can evaporated milk
- 1 (5 ounce) can evaporated milk
- 1 1/2 cups milk (whole milk or 2% recommended)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard powder (enhances cheese flavor, optional but recommended)
- 4 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese (about 1 lb)
- 2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese (or Colby Jack), divided
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional, for extra flavor)
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pats

DIRECTIONS

1. Let your slow cooker do all the hard work for this amazing mac & cheese:
2. Prepare : Slow Cooker: Lightly grease the inside of a 6-quart (or larger) slow cooker with butter or cooking spray.
3. Combine : Ingredients: Add the uncooked elbow macaroni, both cans of evaporated milk, 1 1/2 cups regular milk, salt, black pepper, and dry mustard powder (if using) to the slow cooker. Stir well to combine.
4. Add : Cheese & Butter: Add about half of the shredded sharp cheddar cheese and half of the shredded Monterey Jack cheese to the slow cooker. Stir gently to incorporate. Dot the top of the mixture with the pats of unsalted butter.
5. Slow : Cook: Cover the slow cooker and cook on LOW for 2-3 hours. Crucial Step: After 1 hour of cooking, stir the mixture thoroughly. This helps prevent the pasta from sticking and ensures even cooking and cheese melting. Stir again every 30-45 minutes until the pasta is tender and the sauce is creamy.
6. Add : Remaining Cheese: Once the pasta is tender and the sauce is thick and creamy (after about 2-3 hours), stir in the remaining shredded sharp cheddar cheese and Monterey Jack cheese, along with the grated Parmesan cheese (if using). Stir until all the cheese is completely melted and smooth.
7. Serve: Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Serve hot and enjoy!

SWAPS & NOTES

Pasta: Elbow macaroni is classic, but you can use other small to medium pasta shapes like shells, cavatappi, or penne.

Evaporated Milk: This is key for the ultimate creamy, stable sauce.

Do not substitute with regular milk; the consistency will not be the same.

Milk: Whole milk or 2% milk will provide the best richness for the sauce.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Shred Your Own Cheese: This is the #1 tip for smooth, creamy sauce.

Pre-shredded cheese often has starches that prevent smooth melting.

Regular stirring, especially after the first hour, is critical to prevent the pasta from clumping or sticking to the bottom of the slow cooker, and to ensure even cooking.

Don't Overcook: Overcooked pasta can get mushy.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/mac-cheese-crockpot-creamy-comfort-food-made-easy/>