

## Classic Homemade Spaghetti and Meatballs

For the Meatballs (Makes 22-23 meatballs):



**TIME**  
**5 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

3 slices white bread (crusts removed), diced or torn into pieces

2/3 cup cold water

1 lb lean ground beef (7%-15% fat)

1 lb sweet Italian sausage, casings removed

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (plus more for serving)

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 tsp sea salt

1/2 tsp black pepper

1 large egg

3/4 cup all-purpose flour (for dredging)

3 Tbsp light olive oil (or vegetable oil for sautéing)

1 medium yellow onion (about 1 cup), chopped

56 oz crushed tomatoes (from two 28 oz cans)

2 bay leaves (optional)

Salt and pepper to taste

2 Tbsp fresh basil, finely minced

1 lb spaghetti

Ingredient Swaps and Notes:

**Bread:** Fresh white bread provides moisture, but day-old bread works well too.

**Meat:** A mix of ground beef and pork can be used if Italian sausage isn't available.

**Cheese:** Pecorino Romano can substitute Parmesan for a sharper flavor.

**Herbs:** Dried basil can be used in place of fresh; use 1 tsp dried for every Tbsp fresh.

Instructions:

Soak bread pieces in 2/3 cup cold water for 5 minutes, then mash with a fork.

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef, Italian sausage, mashed bread, Parmesan, garlic, salt, pepper, and egg. Mix until well combined.

Form into 1 1/2-inch meatballs (about the size of a flat ice cream scoop).

Dredge meatballs in flour, shaking off excess.

Heat 3 Tbsp oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat.

Add meatballs in batches, avoiding overcrowding. SautØ until browned on all sides (about 6 minutes total).

Remove meatballs and set aside. They don't need to be fully cooked at this stage.

In the same skillet, add more oil if needed. SautØ chopped onion over medium heat until soft and golden (about 5 minutes).

Add minced garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.

Stir in crushed tomatoes and bay leaves. Bring to a light boil, ensuring it's actively boiling.

Return meatballs to the pan, partially cover with a lid or splatter screen, and simmer gently for 30 minutes, turning meatballs occasionally.

Five minutes before the sauce is done, stir in chopped fresh basil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the Meatballs:
  1. Soak bread pieces in 2/3 cup cold water for 5 minutes, then mash with a fork.
  2. In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef, Italian sausage, mashed bread, Parmesan, garlic, salt, pepper, and egg. Mix until well combined.
  3. Form into 1 1/2-inch meatballs (about the size of a flat ice cream scoop).
  4. Dredge meatballs in flour, shaking off excess.
2. Cook the Meatballs:
  1. Heat 3 : Tbsp oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat.
  2. Add meatballs in batches, avoiding overcrowding. SautØ until browned on all sides (about 6 minutes total).
  3. Remove meatballs and set aside. They don't need to be fully cooked at this stage.
3. Make the Marinara Sauce:
  1. In the same skillet, add more oil if needed. SautØ chopped onion over medium heat until soft and golden (about 5 minutes).
  2. Add minced garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes until fragrant.
  3. Stir in crushed tomatoes and bay leaves. Bring to a light boil, ensuring it's actively boiling.
  4. Return meatballs to the pan, partially cover with a lid or splatter screen, and simmer gently for 30 minutes, turning meatballs occasionally.
  5. Five minutes before the sauce is done, stir in chopped fresh basil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Cook the Spaghetti:
  1. Cook spaghetti according to package instructions until

al dente.

18. Drain and return to the empty pot.
19. 5. Combine and Serve:
20. Pour sauce and meatballs over the cooked spaghetti. Toss gently to combine.
21. Serve family-style on a large platter, garnished with additional Parmesan cheese and fresh basil.
22. Tips for Success: Don't Overmix: When combining meatball ingredients, mix just until combined to keep meatballs tender.
23. Simmer : Gently: A gentle simmer prevents meatballs from breaking apart and allows flavors to meld.
24. Taste as : You Go: Adjust seasoning in the sauce as needed, especially after adding meatballs.
25. Serving Suggestions & Pairings: Enhance your meal with:

## SWAPS & NOTES

**Bread:** Fresh white bread provides moisture, but day-old bread works well too.

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**Cheese:** Pecorino Romano can substitute Parmesan for a sharper flavor.

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## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Don't Overmix:** When combining meatball ingredients, mix just until combined to keep meatballs tender.

**Simmer Gently:** A gentle simmer prevents meatballs from breaking apart and allows flavors to meld.

**Taste as You Go:** Adjust seasoning in the sauce as needed, especially after adding meatballs.

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Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/classic-homemade-spaghetti-and-meatballs/>