

## Easy Meatballs & Pasta Bake: Ultimate Comfort Food Casserole

Few dishes bring a smile to everyone's face quite like a hearty, cheesy pasta bake, and this



**OVEN**  
**375°F**

**TIME**  
**25 min**

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**SAVE**  
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### INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb (450g) ground beef (lean recommended)
- 1/2 lb (225g) ground pork (or use all beef if preferred)
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs (plain or Italian-style)
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped (or 1 tablespoon dried parsley)
- 1 large egg
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 cups macaroni or other small pasta (like penne, ziti, or rotini)
- 2 cups marinara sauce (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

### DIRECTIONS

- Let's get this delicious : Meatballs & Pasta Bake assembled!
- Preheat the : Oven: Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Prepare the : Meatballs: In a large bowl, combine the 1 lb ground beef, 1/2 lb ground pork (if using), 1/2 cup breadcrumbs, 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, 1/4 cup fresh chopped parsley, 1 large egg, 2 cloves minced garlic, 1 teaspoon dried oregano, 1 teaspoon dried basil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon black pepper.
- Using your hands, mix until just combined. Be careful not to over-mix, as this can result in tough meatballs.
- Roll the mixture into meatballs, about 1 to 1.5 inches in diameter. This should yield approximately 20-24 meatballs, depending on size.
- Place the formed meatballs on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or lightly greased.
- Bake for 25 minutes, or until the meatballs are nicely browned on the outside and cooked through. Remove from oven and set aside.
- Cook the : Pasta: While the meatballs are baking, cook the 3 cups macaroni (or chosen small pasta) according to package instructions until al dente (slightly firm to the bite). Drain the pasta thoroughly and set aside.
- Assemble the : Dish: In a large (approx. 9x13 inch) glass baking pan, combine the cooked macaroni, 2 cups marinara sauce, and half (about 1/2 cup) of the shredded mozzarella cheese. Mix gently to combine all

ingredients evenly.

10. Arrange the baked meatballs evenly on top of the pasta mixture. If desired, you can pour an additional 1/2 to 1 cup of marinara sauce over the meatballs for extra sauciness.
11. Sprinkle the remaining mozzarella cheese (about 1/2 cup) and the 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese evenly over the top of the meatballs and pasta.
12. Bake the : Dish: Cover the baking pan tightly with aluminum foil.
13. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and bubbly and the dish is heated through.
14. Remove the foil and bake for an additional 5-10 minutes to allow the top cheese to become golden brown and slightly crispy.
15. Serve: Allow the dish to cool slightly for about 5-10 minutes before serving. This helps the sauce set and makes it easier to serve. Enjoy your hearty Meatballs and Pasta Bake!

## SWAPS & NOTES

**Ground Meat:** The combination of ground beef and pork gives the meatballs a great flavor and tender texture.

You can use all beef, or even ground turkey for a lighter option, but adjust moisture if needed.

**Breadcrumbs:** Plain breadcrumbs are fine, or use Italian seasoned breadcrumbs for extra flavor.

Panko breadcrumbs will give a slightly lighter texture.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Overmix Meatballs: Overmixing the meatball mixture will make them tough.

Mix just until ingredients are combined.

Pre-Bake Meatballs: Baking the meatballs separately first helps them hold their shape and browns them nicely without making the bake greasy.

Al Dente Pasta: Cook the pasta just until al dente.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/easy-meatballs-pasta-bake-ultimate-comfort-food-casserole/>