

## Bacon Loaded Four-Cheese Macaroni Bake: The Ultimate Comfort Dish

Bacon Loaded Four-Cheese Macaroni Bake



**OVEN**  
**375°F**

**TIME**  
**1-2 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

1 lb elbow macaroni  
1/2 lb bacon, cooked and crumbled  
4 tbsp butter  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
2 cups whole milk  
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
1 cup shredded Gruyere cheese  
1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1/2 cup breadcrumbs (Panko works great for extra crunch!)  
Chopped parsley for garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get cooking! This recipe comes together in a few easy steps:
2. Preheat : Oven & Cook Macaroni: Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Cook the elbow macaroni according to package instructions until it's al dente (still a little firm to the bite). Drain the pasta well and set it aside.
3. Make the : Roux: In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium heat. Once melted, stir in the all-purpose flour. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes to create a smooth paste, or roux. This will be the base for your incredibly creamy cheese sauce.
4. Whisk in : Milk & Thicken: Gradually whisk in the whole milk to the roux, a little at a time, ensuring no lumps form. Continue to whisk constantly until the mixture thickens and coats the back of a spoon.
5. Add the : Cheese: Reduce the heat to low. Add the shredded cheddar, mozzarella, Gruyere, and Parmesan cheeses to the thickened milk mixture. Stir continuously until all the cheeses are completely melted and the sauce is smooth and luxurious. Season generously with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Combine & : Transfer: Remove the cheese sauce from the heat. Fold in the cooked macaroni and the crumbled bacon until everything is well combined and coated in that glorious cheese sauce. Transfer this cheesy, bacon-y mixture to a greased baking dish.
7. Add : Topping & Bake: In a small separate bowl, mix the breadcrumbs with about a tablespoon of melted butter (this step is optional but highly recommended for a golden, crispy topping). Sprinkle this mixture

evenly over the macaroni.

8. **Bake to : Golden Perfection:** Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, or until the top is beautifully golden brown and the cheese sauce is bubbly and irresistible.
9. **Cool & : Serve:** Remove the dish from the oven and let it cool slightly for about 5-10 minutes before serving. This allows the sauce to set up a bit, preventing it from being too runny. Garnish with fresh chopped parsley for a pop of color and freshness.
10. **Enjoy!** Dig into your delicious Bacon Loaded Four-Cheese Macaroni Bake!

## SWAPS & NOTES

One of the joys of cooking is making a recipe your own.

Here are some ideas for customizing your macaroni bake: Pasta:

While elbow macaroni is classic, feel free to use other short pasta shapes like cavatappi, shells, or rotini.

**Cheese Blend:** This four-cheese blend is fantastic, but you can certainly experiment!

Fontina, smoked gouda, or even a sharp provolone could be great additions or substitutions.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Grate Your Own Cheese:** While pre-shredded cheese is convenient, freshly grated cheese melts much more smoothly and tastes better.

**Don't Overcook Pasta:** Cook your macaroni to al dente as it will continue to cook in the oven.

**Low Heat for Cheese:** When adding the cheese to the sauce, keep the heat low.

High heat can make the cheese seize up and become grainy.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/bacon-loaded-four-cheese-macaroni-bake-the-ultimate-comfort-dish/>