

## Taco Pasta Salad: The Easy Crowd-Pleasing Potluck Recipe Everyone Loves

16 ounces rotini pasta, or any medium-sized noodle



**TIME**  
**15 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

16 ounces rotini pasta, or any medium-sized noodle  
1 pound ground beef  
3 tablespoons taco seasoning mix  
1 1/2 cups chopped tomatoes  
1 cup diced green bell pepper  
2 to 3 cups Mexican-style shredded cheese  
4 cups shredded lettuce  
15 ounces French dressing  
3 cups slightly crushed nacho cheese or tortilla chips  
Chopped cilantro, optional for garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the rotini according to the package directions.
2. Drain the pasta and set it aside to cool to room temperature.
3. In a skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef until fully cooked.
4. Drain any excess fat, then stir in the taco seasoning until the beef is evenly coated. Let it cool slightly.
5. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooled pasta, seasoned ground beef, chopped tomatoes, diced green bell pepper, shredded cheese, and shredded lettuce.
6. Pour the : French dressing over the salad and toss gently until everything is evenly coated.
7. Just before serving, stir in the slightly crushed nacho cheese or tortilla chips.
8. Garnish with chopped cilantro if desired, then serve immediately.
9. The result is a colorful, flavor-packed salad with creamy, tangy, crunchy, and savory elements in every forkful.

### SWAPS & NOTES

This Taco Pasta Salad is very easy to customize based on your taste and what you have in the kitchen.

Pasta: Rotini works especially well because it catches the dressing, but penne, shells, or bow ties also work.

Ground beef: Ground turkey can be used for a lighter option.

Cheese: Use a Mexican blend, cheddar, Monterey Jack, or a mix of your favorites.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Let the pasta cool before combining it with the lettuce and cheese.

If it is still warm, it can soften the lettuce and affect the texture of the salad.

Cool the taco meat slightly before mixing as well.

This helps everything stay fresh and keeps the cheese from melting too much into the salad.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/taco-pasta-salad-the-easy-crowd-pleasing-potluck-recipe-everyone-loves/>