

Easy Pasta Salad That's Colorful, Flavorful, and Ready in Under 30 Minutes

Comes together quickly with just a few fresh ingredients



TIME
15 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound rotini pasta (or your favorite short pasta)
- 1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 1/2 cups cucumber, diced
- 1 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup black olives, sliced
- 1 1/2 cups Italian dressing (bottled or homemade)
- 1/2 cup shredded or cubed cheddar cheese (optional)
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley or basil, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Cook the :** Pasta boil the pasta in salted water according to package directions, usually about 10 minutes until it's al dente. Then I drain it and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking and cool it down fast.
- 2. Chop the :** Veggies While the pasta cooks, I dice up the cucumbers, slice the cherry tomatoes, and chop the bell pepper and red onion. I like everything in bite-sized pieces so every forkful gets a bit of everything.
- 3. Mix :** Everything Together In a large mixing bowl, I combine the cooked pasta, veggies, olives, and cheeses if I'm using them. Then I pour in the Italian dressing and toss everything until well coated. I add a few cranks of black pepper and a pinch of salt to taste.
- 4. Chill and :** Serve cover and refrigerate the pasta salad for at least an hour to let the flavors meld together. Just before serving, I toss again and sprinkle with fresh parsley or basil for color and a burst of freshness.

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