

7 Steps to Creating a Casserole

“What’s for dinner?” If you sometimes answer the question, “I have no idea!” then check out these creative ideas. This publication includes ways to use ingredients in your cupboard or freezer, *or leftovers in your refrigerator*. You can make a satisfying and economical meal for your family in seven easy steps.



1. Choose one starch.

- Rice: Combine 1 c. rice and 2 c. water. Bring to a boil. Turn heat to low and cover pan with lid. Simmer until water is absorbed, about 20 minutes. *Or substitute 3 c. leftover cooked rice.*
- Pasta: Heat 6 c. water until it boils. Stir in 1½ c. pasta. Cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain. *Or substitute 3 c. leftover cooked pasta.*
- Potatoes: Heat 6 c. water until it boils. Add 3 c. diced potatoes and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain. *Or substitute 3 c. leftover cooked, diced potatoes.*

2. Choose one protein.

- 1 pound cooked ground beef
- 1½ c. cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef or pork

- 2 c. chopped hard-cooked eggs
- 1 or 2 (6- to 8-ounce) cans tuna or salmon, drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can or 2 c. cooked dry edible beans (pinto, black, white, navy, kidney, etc.). Drain and rinse canned beans to reduce sodium.

3. Choose one or more vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, green beans, squash or mixed veggies.

- 2 c. fresh vegetables, cooked
- 2 c. frozen vegetables, cooked
- 1 (15-ounce) can vegetables, drained

4. Choose one sauce.

- 1 (10-ounce) can soup (reduced-sodium cream of mushroom, cream of chicken, cream of celery, tomato, cheese, etc.)
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes with juice
- 2 c. white sauce, using recipe provided on the back of this handout

White Sauce

1½ Tbsp. fat (butter, margarine or oil)

3 Tbsp. flour

1½ c. skim milk

¾ tsp. salt

Dash of pepper

To make white sauce: Melt fat in saucepan.

Mix in flour to make a smooth paste.

Slowly add milk. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until thickened.

Add salt and pepper. Cook for three to four minutes longer.

5. Choose one or more flavorings.

- ½ c. chopped onion, celery or green pepper
- ¼ c. sliced black olives
- ½ c. salsa
- 1 to 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 to 2 tsp. dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, tarragon, sage, etc.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

6. Choose one or more toppings (optional).

If desired, after heating, place any of the following on top:

- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ c. grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese
- ¼ c. buttered breadcrumbs

7. Combine all ingredients except toppings, then heat.

Place ingredients in a 9- by 13-inch pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350 F until bubbly * (30 to 45 minutes). Add more liquid (such as water) if it becomes too dry. Add toppings and return to oven about 10 minutes.

* May cook on stovetop in saucepan or skillet for 15 to 20 minutes. Add more liquid if it becomes too dry. Watch closely so it does not burn.

Menu

Macaroni, Beef and Tomato Casserole

Spinach salad

Baked apples

Low-fat or fat-free milk

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