

KIDS CLUB

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to week 3 of our new ChopChop Kids Club newsletter! (If you missed the last one, it's [here](#).) This week we're focusing on canned tomatoes. Canned tomatoes are convenient because they last a long time in your pantry—and so does pasta, which is a great partner for tomatoes! There are ways to make tomato sauce that involve cooking on the stove for many hours, but we like this recipe, which is nice and fast.

You can start your sauce, and by the time you finish cooking your pasta, it will be ready!

Let's get started!



World's Fastest Tomato Sauce

Pasta is a staple in many homes, which makes homemade tomato sauce a super-useful recipe. Once you master the basic recipe, you can get creative by adding chopped vegetables, cheese, ground meat, or even anchovies. This all-purpose tomato sauce is also excellent with meatballs, as a pizza sauce, or on polenta, rice, or barley.

ADULT: YES | HANDS-ON TIME: 35 MINUTES | TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES | MAKES: 6-8 SERVINGS

KITCHEN GEAR

Cutting board
Sharp knife (adult needed)
Large skillet
Measuring spoons
Can opener
Measuring cups
Wooden spoon
Potato masher (if you have one)
Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 (28-ounce) cans diced tomatoes, including the liquid
- 1 pound pasta, cooked (see below)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil leaves (if you have it)
- Grated Parmesan cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Put the skillet on the stove, turn the heat to low, and add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the garlic, dried basil, and oregano and cook until the garlic is just golden, 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Add the tomatoes and their liquid, raise the heat to medium-high, and cook until the mixture just starts to boil. Turn the heat down to low and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste the sauce and add a pinch of salt if you think it needs it. Leave as is or mash it a bit with the potato masher (or spoon) to make it less chunky.
3. Top the cooked pasta with the tomato sauce, fresh basil, and Parmesan cheese.



WHERE IN THE WORLD?

When we eat pasta and tomato sauce, we think of Italy. Do you have a globe or a map in your house? Use it—or find a map online—to locate Italy and answer these three questions:

1. What is the capital of Italy?
2. What are the names of the islands off the coast of Italy?
3. What countries share borders with Italy?

Now look in a book or online to find out more about the country. (Extra credit: Can you name a country that was eating pasta before Italy?)



USE WHAT YOU HAVE

No diced tomatoes? No problem! It's okay to use a different canned tomato product such as whole tomatoes or crushed tomatoes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ripe tomatoes can be red, green, yellow, orange, pink, purple, or even white. They can be solid-colored or striped, round or oblong, small as a grape or big as a melon.



KITCHEN SCIENCE

Tomato chemistry

Have you ever made a baking soda volcano? This is a kitchen version of that experiment, and it tests the same basic chemical reaction.

1. Take a spoonful of tomatoes or tomato juice from the can (before you make the sauce) and put it in a small dish. Put a spoonful of vinegar in another small dish and a spoonful of water in a third dish.
2. Sprinkle the water with a pinch of baking soda. What happens?
3. Sprinkle the vinegar with baking soda. What happens this time? Do you know why?
4. Sprinkle the tomatoes with baking soda. What happens?

- What conclusion can you draw about the tomatoes?
- What other ingredients could you test? Can you predict what would happen?

KITCHEN SKILL

How to Cook Pasta



1. Fill a large pot two-thirds full with water and put it on the stove (an adult may need to carry it). Add a tablespoon of kosher salt, cover the pot, and set the heat to high.
2. Use pot holders to peek under the lid and watch for bubbles breaking all over the surface, which means the water is boiling. When the water comes to a full, rolling boil, carefully add the pasta and stir with tongs or a wooden spoon. When the water returns to a boil, lower the heat to medium.
3. Cook, without a lid, until the pasta is tender (see the pasta box for the range of cooking times). Test the pasta for tenderness by carefully fishing a piece out with tongs, running it under cold water, and tasting it. When it's done just the way you like it, turn off the heat.
4. Put a colander in the sink. Ask an adult to use pot holders to take the pot off the stove and pour the hot water and pasta into the colander. Gently shake the colander to help the water drain. Your pasta is ready to serve!



DO YOU HAVE MORE CANNED TOMATOES?

Try one of these recipes.

- **Roasted Tomato-Vegetable Soup** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/roasted-tomato-vegetable-soup
- **Shakshuka** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/shakshuka
- **Tomato Soup with Cheddar Cheese** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/tomato-soup-cheddar-cheese

Shakshuka ►

TOO MUCH TOMATO SAUCE?

If you have extra tomato sauce, you can freeze it in an ice cube tray for individual portions to serve later. Once the cubes are frozen, transfer them to a resealable plastic bag. Keep them frozen until you need them, then thaw in the microwave or in a small pot over low heat.

ACTIVITY: TOMATO CONNECTION

Has anyone ever said to you, "I love you from my head to-ma-toes"? Now is a great time to write a "tomatoes" note to someone you love. Not in the mood for writing? Draw them a picture that shows what you love about them! And if you don't have a stamp to mail the note, that's okay. You can text or email a photo of what you wrote or drew. It will mean just as much.



GET MOVING: (TOMA)TOE TOUCHES

You can't spell "tomatoes" without "toes"! Toe touches are a great way to stretch, especially if you've been sitting for a while. Plus, you can do toe touches anywhere: outside in the yard, in your bedroom, in the living room, or anywhere else you have a little space. Stand up straight with your legs hip-width apart. Lift your arms straight in the air. Slowly bend at the waist and reach your fingers toward your toes for 5 seconds. You can also stretch side to side: Lift your left arm up, then slowly bend at the waist to try to touch it to your right toes. Stretch for 5 seconds and then stand back up. Repeat with your right arm and left toes.

Can you touch your toes? If you practice every day, you'll get more flexible!

POTFUL OF MATH

Cooking involves a lot of math: calculating cost, measuring ingredients, changing serving sizes, and more. Here's some quick math for practice.

1. The tomato sauce recipe makes 6 servings. If you wanted to make 12 servings (so you can freeze some for later), how many garlic cloves would you need? How many teaspoons of oregano would you need? How many cups of fresh basil would you need?
2. If you had only 1 can of tomatoes in your pantry, you'd have to adjust the rest of the recipe, too. How many garlic cloves would you need? How many teaspoons of oregano would you need? How many cups of fresh basil would you need?
3. There are 3 teaspoons in 1 tablespoon. If you had only a 1-teaspoon measuring spoon in your kitchen, how many times would you have to fill it to measure the olive or vegetable oil?