



cheap 'n' lazy pasta

Ridiculously cheap and easy to make, this pasta takes just 15 min and makes a big filling meal for only 15p! Use as dinner, or is cheap enough for a big snack in the evening to quench your rumbling tummies...

1/4 BAG PASTA	0.05
1/2 CAN TOMATOES	0.10
PINCH OF OREGANO	
PINCH OF BASIL	
DRIED CHILLI	
SPLASH OF OIL	
TOTAL	0.15

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:	
SLICE OF BREAD	0.02
GRATED CHEESE	0.20
TOTAL WITH EXTRAS:	0.37

Easy-peasy this one! There are definitely better ways to cook a tomato sauce (see bolognaise recipe) but this one is so cheap and easy, and doesn't taste too bad either :)

First get a pan and half fill with water, salt well and bring to the boil. Then add about 1/4rd of your cheap bag of pasta (the twisty stuff), and let simmer for 10 minutes. The Italians demand their pasta be 'al-dente' which means if you try one it should still have a little bite to it. Personally I like it really soft, so I leave it in a bit longer.

Now drain the pasta, and put the pan down somewhere that isn't on the heat. Add all the spices and oil, and maybe a bit more salt. Then stick

back on the heat and pour in about 1/2 of a can of chopped tomatoes.

Turn the heat down pretty low, and stir regularly for about 5 minutes, and then you're done! Spoon out into a bowl or plate (if you are lucky and have brought cheese you could even grate some on top) and maybe even have a slice of bread next to it to mop up all the juices.



the \$2 a day challenge



Spaghetti bolognese

This recipe is based on TVP vegemince, which you can buy from health food shops or good shops like Beanies :o). It's made of dried soya, and when it's cooked up tastes just as good as real mince, with all the protein and none of the saturated fat. And of course it is very cheap...

100G SPAGHETTI	0.05
1 CAN TOMATOES	0.20
1 ONION	0.15
50G DRIED TVP	0.10
PINCH OF OREGANO	
PINCH OF BASIL	
SPLASH OF OIL	
TOTAL	0.50

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:	
GRATED CHEESE	0.20
TOTAL WITH EXTRAS:	0.70

Making spaghetti bolognese is very easy. Cut up the onion into little cubes, and in a pan heat up the oil for a minute or two, then bung in the spices and onion. Stir and fry the onion for about 4 minutes until it just starts to go a wonderful golden brown. Now put in about 3/4 of a mug of the mince stuff and fry for just a minute with the onion. Stir well, and add half a mug of water, the mince will soak it all up. Stir for another minute and then plop in the tomatoes, stir and simmer for 10 minutes. Try not to mash up the tomatoes till they have been boiling for at least 10 minutes, as if they cook for a bit while still whole they will taste a bit sweeter.

Now we need to get the spaghetti on the boil, so half fill another pan

with water, and a good pinch of salt. Heat on high until boiling, then put in the spaghetti at an angle. It wont all fit in the pan, but it doesn't matter, because as the bottom of the spaghetti gets wet and goes soggy, it will curl up, and after a few minutes you should be able to push the whole long strands in. If you are super lazy or in a rush, you can just snap the spaghetti in half and throw it in, but you don't get the long stringy fun later when eating it :)

Once boiling the spaghetti will cook in about 10 minutes, and your sauce should be done at the same time: just keep stirring every now and then. Drain the spaghetti, bung on a plate and scoop the bolognese on top. Serve with optional grated cheese, a flourish, and fake Italian accent!

the \$2 a day challenge



Shepherd's pie

A traditional English meal made cheap with the amazing TVP vege-mince! This recipe makes three generous portions to help spread your money. Just keep the left-overs in the fridge, and microwave the next day for 3 minutes. Hearty and very filling.

Basically, shepherds pie is just a thick bolognese sauce with mashed potato on the top, but represents all the essential food groups and nutrients in one meal! Yay!

Chop up your onion and courgette into small cubes and fry in a little oil for 6 minutes. Add basil, oregano, and salt to taste. Now put in a mug of TVP and fry for another 2 minutes, adding a mug of water slowly as it cooks. When the mince has soaked up some of the water, put in two cans of tomatoes and leave to simmer.

To make the mashed potato topping, wash and chop 5 medium sized potatoes into small chunks as this will help it cook faster. Peel if you like, but I like my mashed potato with the peel in it: that's where all the nutrients are!

Boil the potatoes for about 15 minutes until when you stick a fork in a bit of potato it will slide off

5 MEDIUM POTATOES	0.35
100G DRIED TVP	0.20
2 CANS OF TOMATOES	0.40
1 ONION	0.15
1 COURGETTE	0.40
50G GRATED CHEESE	0.20
100ML MILK	0.10
BASIL	
OREGANO	
SPLASH OF OIL	

TOTAL 1.80

(0.60 PER PORTION)

easily. Remember to stir the tomatoes now and then, and pre-heat the oven to 180°C.

Drain the potatoes and mash with a potato masher, or a fork. While mashing add about half a mug of milk, but watch the consistency, you don't want it to be too runny or too dry. It should pack to a solid form a bit like play-dough. Add salt and garlic if you like.

In a big oven dish pour out all the tomato and mince mixture, it shouldn't be too runny, otherwise cook for another 5 minutes or so. Then carefully spread the mashed potato over the top, and garnish with a handful of grated cheese and more oregano. It should cook in about 30-45 minutes, it is done when the cheese goes a deep golden brown.

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Courgette pesto

Jars of ready made pesto are so expensive, but this makes a surprisingly delicious alternative with a nutty and filling taste. The secret of it all - grating half a courgette and frying it! Very quick to make, and an interesting alternative to having tomato based sauce for pasta all the time.

From chopping board to table in less than 15 minutes, that's that target!

First off, chop half an onion into small pieces, and do the same with one mushroom. You can do this on a plate if you are feeling too lazy to wash up a chopping board as well...

Chop off the wooden stump of the courgette and grate roughly half of it. In a small saucepan heat a generous amount of oil until it is hot enough that a piece of onion starts to bubble when put in. Now throw in the grated courgette, onion and mushroom, and stir well so it all gets a bit of the oil. Put in quite a lot of basil and oregano, about two or three pinches of each. Garlic flakes might not go amiss either.

100G PASTA	0.05
1/2 A COURGETTE	0.20
1/2 AN ONION	0.05
1 SMALL MUSHROOM	0.10
GRATED CHEESE	0.20
BASIL	
OREGANO	
TOTAL	0.60
OPTIONAL EXTRAS:	
SLICE OF BREAD	0.02
TOTAL WITH EXTRAS	0.62

Now here's a tip to cook pasta faster and save energy - rather than boiling the water on the stove, heat it up in the kettle first. This is quicker and uses less electricity than waiting for the stove to boil it.

So put two cups of pasta in a pan with a little splash of water and some salt, and four mugs worth of water in a kettle. Get the stove heating the pasta right away, and once boiled add the rest of the water from the kettle. Put a lid on the pan and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring the pesto mix occasionally on a medium heat.

Now drain the pasta, and pour all the pesto mixture into the pan with the pasta with the grated cheese. Mix well for a minute and serve.

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