

## MACARONI CHEESE

Serves 4 - can be prepared up to 12 hours ahead  
60 minutes from start of preparation to serving.

### Ingredients

4 rashers of unsmoked bacon  
275g macaroni  
50g butter  
50g plain flour  
750ml milk  
1 teaspoon English mustard  
150g extra-mature Cheddar cheese, grated  
salt and pepper

### Method

Needs a 1.75 litre ovenproof dish. Preheat the oven to 170°C fan.  
Fry bacon in a frying pan until it is fairly crisp, and then cut it into small pieces.  
Grate the cheddar cheese.

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and add the macaroni. Set timer for 11 minutes.  
Put the milk in a separate saucepan and heat.

Melt the butter in a medium-sized saucepan, gradually add the flour while continually whisking over a high heat. Gradually whisk in the hot milk, and then bring the sauce to a gentle boil and continue whisking and cooking it for 2 minutes until the sauce has thickened and is smooth. Add more milk if the sauce is too thick.

Remove the sauce from the heat, add the mustard, two-thirds of the cheese and the bacon pieces, and season well with salt and pepper. Stir the sauce to mix it all well together.

Check that the macaroni is cooked *al dente*. Once it is, drain it in a colander, return the macaroni to the saucepan and then pour the sauce over the macaroni. Stir well to ensure that the sauce is evenly distributed around the macaroni.

Pour the mixture into the ovenproof dish. Sprinkle the remaining cheese evenly over the mixture.  
Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes until golden brown.

Serve straight from the oven.