

## How to make pasta dough for ravioli

### Ingredients:

*For 4 main-course servings of pasta, you'll need:*

9 oz all-purpose flour (2 cups spooned and leveled)  
1 tablespoon kosher salt (or 1 tsp table salt)  
2 large eggs  
1-3 tablespoons cold water  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
Semolina flour for sprinkling finished pasta

### Measuring:

This is important and trickier than you think. Flour and eggs are very difficult to measure. The only real way to measure flour is by weighing it (which, unfortunately, is not a popular method in the US). Measuring it with a cup can give you as much as 25% difference between cooks. Eggs are not very consistent either. Even the ones in the same box can be a little different. To deal with these irregularities, I suggest you break the eggs into a glass measuring cup and add enough water to give you 1/2 cup of wet ingredients (measured at the bottom of the meniscus with your eyes level with 1/2 cup line). Eventually, you don't have to obsess about measurements. You'll be able to judge based on the feel of the dough, but if this is your first time making fresh pasta, accurate measurement is the easiest way to get the right consistency.

### Equipment:

Theoretically, you can make pasta with nothing more than a fork and a rolling pin. I just don't think it's such a good idea. It's a labor intensive process, and there is a lot of technique to worry about, so I suggest you employ the following equipment:

- A food processor and a pasta machine (I use [Imperia hand crank one](#))

If you are making ravioli, you'll also need a [pastry wheel](#) or a [ravioli maker](#).

### Technique:

#### Stage 1: Integrating wet and dry ingredients

1. Put **flour and salt** into a food processor bowl and process for 10 seconds.
2. Put **eggs** into a glass measuring cup. Add enough **cold water** to make **1/2 cup** (see the "Measuring" section for details). Add the wet ingredients and 1 tsp oil to the flour in the food processor.
3. Turn on the processor and mix until ingredients are evenly distributed. Mixture will be sandy and crumbly.
4. Pour **2 tablespoons cold water** into a glass measuring cup. With the processor running, add this water, a little at a time, through the feed tube. At this stage the mixture should start coming together into a ball. If you are not getting a ball after 30 seconds of mixing, open the processor redistribute the dough and try processing again. If you are still not getting a ball, drizzle in a little more water, 1 tsp at a time.

### **Stage 2: Kneading**

Turn the dough out onto a work surface and start kneading. After the first 2 minutes of kneading, the dough should be soft, pliable, and slightly tacky, but not sticky. If it continues to stick to the work surface, add a little flour and continue kneading. Knead for 8 minutes total. Don't short cut this step. Kneading is what develops gluten and makes your dough elastic and workable later.

### **Stage 3: Resting**

Wrap the dough tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1-24 hours.

### **Stage 4: Rolling**

1. Cut the dough into **quarters**. If you doubled the recipe. Work with one piece of dough, while keeping the others tightly wrapped in plastic -- dough dries out quickly.
2. Set the pasta roller to the **number 2 setting**. Flatten out a piece of dough. Put it through the pasta roller. Set the pasta roller to the next thinner setting. Feed the dough through. Keep reducing the setting and feeding through the dough making it thinner and thinner each time. I roll mine out to setting 6 (7 for delicate filled pastas). As you thin out the dough, it will get longer and longer. When you crank it through, don't stop in the middle or it will stretch and tear. Feed it with one hand and turn the crank with the other. As soon as you see the dough show out the other end, you can let go of the dough from the top and use that hand to pull it out the bottom. This does take some practice to master, especially that each pasta machine is a little different. Experiment to see what works for you.

### **Trouble shooting**

#### **The dough sticks to the machine**

Try sprinkling the dough with flour before rolling it with the machine. If it still sticks, your dough might be too wet. Try using less water next time.

#### **The dough tears when it goes through the machine**

Collect the torn up dough. Knead it into a ball, flatten it out and try again. Sometimes this happens with perfectly good dough. Don't forget to pinch the edges flat after folding before putting the dough through the machine. If this happens with every piece of dough that you try, you might need to adjust the proportions of liquid to dry ingredients next time.

### **Variations:**

Once you master the basic recipe, feel free to experiment. You can make a Piedmont pasta by using only egg yolks for your liquid. You'll need a ton of them. There is a reason this is called a 40 yolk pasta. I find that even substituting 1 of the eggs with all yolks gives the pasta a nice rich silkiness. Or you can make a leaner pasta by using only 1 egg and more water. Start with 1/2 cup of liquid ingredients for 2 cups of flour and then add water as necessary to get the right consistency.

## Orrechiette

Orecchiette is a type of pasta native to Apulia, whose shape resembles a small ear. In Italian, "ear" is orecchio, so this translates as "little ears". This dough has a higher percentage of water and will feel quite slack compared to other dough. The wetter dough facilitates the hand shaping of the noodles and olive oil lubricates against sticking.

12 ounces all purpose flour  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
6 + ounces cool water  
1 tablespoon olive oil

### Making the dough

Place the flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor and pulse for 10 seconds. Add the olive oil and 6 oz. Water and run the machine until the dough forms a ball. If it is too dry drizzle in a little water at a time with the machine running until a ball forms. Knead the dough for 6 to 8 minutes, then wrap it in plastic and allow it to relax for 60 minutes.

### Shaping the dough

Take up a piece of dough in your hands and, with fingers outstretched, roll the dough on the work surface to elongate the strand until it has the diameter of a pencil. Cut into buttons of 1/4 inch thickness then, lay them an inch apart on the edge of the table and, after dipping your thumb into flour, press the buttons with your thumb forming a rimmed disc. Move the orecchiette to a semolina coated sheet pan as you form them and keep them lined up parallel to each other, otherwise they have a tendency to adhere to one another.

### Cooking

Drop the pasta in a large pot of heavily salted boiling water and cook al dente about 3 or 4 minutes, Remove and serve

## Handmade gnocchi

For the dough

24 oz 1 1/2 lb. russet potatoes - boil & skin on  
3 1/2 oz unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
1 egg, lightly beaten

### For shaping

Semolina  
Unbleached all-purpose flour

## Dough

Put potatoes into the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until potatoes are tender when pierced with a knife or toothpick, 35-50 minutes.

Cool potatoes for 5 minutes, peel them while still hot, and put through a potato ricer or food meal. Place potatoes on a sheet pan and finish cooling until room temperature.

Add the salt and the flour and mix, then add the egg. Gently knead the dough with your hand just until it comes together. It should feel a little dry at first, but should come together into a ball that is soft and tacky, but not sticky. If it's too sticky, add more flour.

*use spatula  
don't  
over knead*

## Shaping

Cut a 2/3 inch thick strip of dough. Roll it with the floured palms of your hands on a floured work surface into a 1/2 inch rope. Cut the rope crosswise into 1/2 inch big pillows using a pastry scraper. Dunk the cut sides of pillows into flour and place them on the cookie sheet.

Don't let the gnocchi touch each other or they'll stick together. Repeat with remaining dough. After shaping, you can keep the gnocchi at room temperature for several hours until you are ready to cook them. Don't cover the gnocchi, or they'll get soggy. You can also freeze them on the cookie sheet until hard, and then transfer to freezer bags.

## Cooking

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Drop the gnocchi into the water. After gnocchi float, spoon them out into the warm bowl and dress with the sauce of your choice.

## Caramelized Onions

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more as needed  
2 pounds yellow onions, sliced  
Salt and pepper  
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Set a large, heavy (not non-stick) skillet over medium heat. Add the oil, onions, and a generous pinch of salt. Cook stirring occasionally until onions get somewhat brown, 12-18 minutes.

Turn down the heat to medium-low and cook stirring occasionally until onions are medium brown, about 45 minutes, adding more oil if they stick too much.

Add balsamic vinegar, and cook stirring occasionally until onions are dark nutty brown, about 15 minutes. Season with the salt and pepper and take off the heat.



### **Cannellini Bean Filling**

2 cans cannellini beans (or great northern or navy beans), drained and rinsed

1 cup goat cheese

1 tablespoon pesto

1 recipe caramelized onions

Salt and pepper

Place the beans and cheese in a food processor until completely smooth, scraping down the sides of food processor occasionally. Move to a bowl, season to taste with salt and pepper and fold in the onions. If possible, refrigerate for at least 2 hours before using.

### **Sage Butter Sauce**

1 stick unsalted butter

20 sage leaves

In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Lay out sage leaves flat over butter. Cook on low heat until sage is crispy turning half way through, about 15 to 20 minutes. Take off heat, toss with the pasta and serve with parmesan.

### **Tomato sauce**

1/4 cup olive oil

1 onions, diced

4 cloves garlic, minced or crushed

2, 28 ounce cans tomatoes, chopped

1 tbsp sugar

2 tablespoons pesto

Heat olive oil in a heavy pot on medium heat. Add onions and garlic, . Cook on medium heat until the vegetables have softened then add the tomatoes and sugar. Turn down heat and simmer 50 minutes. Add the pesto and salt and pepper to taste.

### **Pesto**

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves

1/2 cup walnuts

2 cloves garlic

1/2 cup pecorino or parmesan cheese

2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Combine the basil, walnuts, garlic and cheese in a food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped. Add the oil and process until fully incorporated and smooth.

To make a pesto cream sauce simmer 2 cups of heavy cream until reduced by 1/3. Add 1 cup of pesto and blend well.