



Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
UNL FOOD

Making a Casserole from What's on Hand



If you have small amounts of leftovers and would like to mix them together into some type of casserole, try this recipe. Turn leftovers into favorite family foods!

"Make-Your-Own" Casserole

Makes 6 servings

General Directions:

Select food(s) from each category or use your own favorites. Combine in a 2- to 2 1/2- quart casserole dish that has been greased or coated with cooking spray. Cover and bake at 350°F for about 50 minutes to 1 hour or microwave using 50% power for about 15 to 30 minutes, rotating or stirring as necessary. Heat until steaming hot (165°F) throughout.

Starch - select ONE:

- 2 cups uncooked pasta (macaroni, penne, spiral, bow tie), COOKED
- 1 cup uncooked long-grain white or brown rice, COOKED
- 4 cups uncooked noodles, COOKED

Protein - select ONE:

- 2 cups cooked ground beef
- 2 cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, or pork
- 2 cups chopped hard-cooked egg
- 2 (6 to 8-oz.) cans fish or seafood, flaked
- 2 cups cooked or canned dry beans (kidney, etc.)

Vegetable - select ONE:

- 1 (10-oz.) pkg. thawed and drained frozen spinach, broccoli, green beans, green peas
- 1 (16-oz.) can green beans, peas, carrots, corn, drained
- 2 cups sliced fresh zucchini

Sauce - select ONE:

- 2 cups white sauce or 1 can sauce-type soup (mushroom, celery, cheese, tomato, etc.) mixed with milk to make 2 cups
- 1 (16-oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice

Flavor - select ONE or MORE:

- 1/2 cup chopped celery, 1/4 cup chopped onion, 1/4 cup sliced black olives
- 1 - 2 teaspoons mixed dried leaf herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram, tarragon)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Topping- select ONE or MORE:

If desired after heating, place on top:

- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup shredded Swiss, Cheddar, or Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/4 cup buttered bread crumbs
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup canned fried onion rings

Return casserole with topping(s), uncovered, to oven for about 10 minutes or to microwave for about 2 minutes.

This article was originally written by Alice Henneman, MS, RD. Updated and reviewed in 2020.

This article has been peer-reviewed.