

# KIDS CLUB

## NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the latest issue of our ChopChop Kids Club newsletter! (If you missed the last one, it's [here](#).)

This week we're cooking pasta. Do you have pasta night at your house? What's your favorite pasta shape? Something long, like spaghetti? Short and tubular, like ziti? A fun shape, like wagon wheels or bowties? The main recipe this week is a salad made from orzo, a small rice-shaped pasta that's fun to eat. The skills you'll practice will help you cook up any kind of pasta. Imagine the pasta-bilities!



# Orzo Salad

The best thing about this summer salad is that you can add anything you have on hand—canned white beans, cubes of cheese, leftover cooked vegetables, nuts, herbs, and more. The list of ingredients is only a suggestion—make this salad your own by adding your favorite ingredients and extras. BY KATHY GUNST

■ HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES ■ MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

## KITCHEN GEAR

Sharp knife (adult needed)  
Cutting board  
Measuring cups  
Measuring spoons  
Large pot  
Colander or strainer  
Pot holders  
Large bowl  
Wooden spoon or silicone spatula

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup orzo (about a third of a 1-pound box), cooked and drained (see next page)
- 2 to 3 cups chopped or shredded raw or cooked vegetables: corn kernels, bell peppers, carrots, celery, zucchini, broccoli, tomatoes, beans, or other favorites
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice or vinegar (any kind)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh parsley, cilantro, basil, or mint (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon black pepper

## INSTRUCTIONS

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

1. While the orzo cooks, put the vegetables in the bowl. Add the olive oil, lemon juice or vinegar, herbs, salt, and pepper and stir.
2. Add the drained orzo and stir well. Taste a little and add more salt or pepper if needed.
3. Serve right away, or cover and refrigerate up to 4 hours.



Kathy Gunst is a James Beard award-winning food journalist. She's the author of 16 cookbooks, most recently *Rage Baking: The Transformative Power of Flour, Fury, and Women's Voices*. She is also the resident chef of NPR's daily news show *Here & Now*.

## GET CREATIVE

What else could you add to your Orzo Salad? Look in your refrigerator and pantry for inspiration—and in your garden, too, if you've got one. Chopped olives? Minced garlic? Grated lemon zest? Crumbled feta? Try it and see!

## 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!





Pasta with Peas

## DO YOU HAVE MORE PASTA?

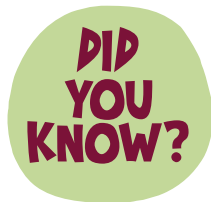
Try some of these recipes.

- **Corny Tomato Pasta Salad:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/corny-tomato-pasta-salad/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/corny-tomato-pasta-salad/)
- **Pesto Pasta with Green Vegetables:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/pesto-pasta-with-green-vegetables/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/pesto-pasta-with-green-vegetables/)
- **Pasta with Peas:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/pasta-with-peas/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/pasta-with-peas/)
- **Triple Green Pasta:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/triple-green-pasta/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/triple-green-pasta/)
- **Spaghetti with Red Clam Sauce:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/spaghetti-with-red-clam-sauce/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/spaghetti-with-red-clam-sauce/)
- **Peanutty Sesame Noodles:** [www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/peanutty-sesame-noodles/](http://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/peanutty-sesame-noodles/)

## WORD FUN: PASTA POEM

So many words for pasta are really fun to say, and since most Italian words end in vowel sounds, a lot of them rhyme! Pick a few pasta words and make your own pasta poem. It can be long or short, and it can rhyme or not! Here's one to get your ideas flowing.

*I wanted some round tortellini  
But all we had was a box of linguine  
So I put it in a pot  
Boiled till it was hot,  
And topped it all off with zucchini.*



**October is National Pasta Month.**

**The expression "use your noodle" means "use your brain to think about something."**

## POTFUL OF MATH: ESTIMATING WITH PASTA

Estimating is when you roughly guess a value, number, or quantity of something. For example, you might estimate that your house is a mile from the supermarket or that there are 1000 leaves on a tree. When you're cooking pasta, you'll never need to count how many pieces of pasta you're cooking, since pasta is packaged by weight and you can always measure it. But it can be fun to guess. Try out your estimation skills:

1. Look at your box of orzo and guess how many pieces of orzo are inside.
2. Now gather more information and estimate again. For example, you might count the number of orzo in 1 tablespoon, then use that number for the basis of a new calculation. How did you come up with your estimate?
3. Would measuring the box help? What information would it give you?



## GET MOVING: NOODLE AROUND

Turn on some music and move like a piece of pasta. Match your movements to their shapes: a piece of spaghetti is long and wiggly; rotini is twisty. What other pastas and movements can you come up with? Have someone in your family yell out the name of a pasta and then everyone has to move like that pasta for 10 seconds. Then someone else will choose a new style. Continue until the song is over or you run out of pasta names!

## WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Noodles and pasta are found all over the world, in many countries and cultures. In Japan, soba noodles are made from buckwheat flour. In Vietnam, the famous flavorful soup called pho is filled with rice noodles. If you visit Italy you might eat gnocchi, penne, and lasagna, while in Morocco you'll eat teeny pasta called couscous. In Argentina you can try sorrentinos, which are kind of like ravioli, and in Spain fideos are thin, short noodles that are used in soups or fideua, a dish that is like paella. In Germany, spätzle is served with cabbage and cheese, and in Jewish tradition, noodles are made into a dish called kugel.

There are so many ways to eat noodles and pasta! Choose a country or culture and see what you can learn about the pasta or noodles they eat. Then, see if you can find a recipe to make it yourself at home!