How to cook and serve pasta:

- **Synchronize sauce and pasta** - Before starting to cook either the sauce or the pasta, estimate cooking times on both. Fresh pasta will have much shorter cooking times than dried, start your sauce earlier.

- **Use a big pan** – There needs to be plenty of room for the pasta to move around in a large amount of water. The best pan is a large, straight-sided stainless steel pot with a drainer insert.

- **Use a large quantity of water**. 1 gallon (4 quarts) per pound of pasta. Pasta shapes may stick together if crowded in a small pot and taste gummy.

- **Get the water boiling** – Hasten the boiling point by covering the pot.

- **Add enough salt** – 1 ½ - 2 tablespoons 1 pound of pasta. Pasta cooked without salt is tasteless, and the wrong amount of salt is no better.

- **Add pasta all at once** – Perhaps open the box or bag of dried pasta ahead of time and transfer it to a bowl for easy entry into the boiling water.

- **Return the water quickly to a boil** – Give the pasta a quick stir, recover the pot and bring back to a boil as quickly as possible. Once you’re back to a violent boil, remove the lid, lower the heat and simmer until done.

- **Stir the pasta frequently** – Keeps them from sticking together.

- **Drain carefully and thoroughly** – If you have a strainer pan, lift it out carefully and shake off excess water. If pouring

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**Pastas you might find in your home**

- Angel Hair/Cappellini—Very thin, delicate version of spaghetti
- Cannelloni—Big round tubes of pasta for stuffing
- Creste Di Gali—Half-moon shape
- Ditalini—Short tubes, most commonly in soups
- Farfalle—Bowtie shape
- Fettuccini—Long, thin pasta, perfect for heavier sauces
- Fusilli—Curly, corkscrew pasta, good for salads and casseroles
- Gnocci—Pasta made with potato starch, usually pillow shaped
- Lasagna—Long, flat, wide pasta sheets for casserole
- Linguine—Long, very thin pasta (between fettuccini & Spaghetti)
- Macaroni—Small, tubular pasta for salad or casserole
- Manicotti—Rigid pasta tubes, suitable for stuffing
- Orzo—Small, grain shaped pasta, often mistaken for rice
- Penne—Tubular pasta with an angled end
- Quadrefiore—Rectangular, flower shaped pasta
- Radiatore—Ruffled, ridged pasta works well in sauces or salads
- Ravioli—Two pieces of flat dough that sandwich a filling
- Rigatoni—Large, grooved pasta tubes suitable for heavy sauces
- Rotini—Similar to fusilli, but with a longer corkscrew shape
- Ruote/Wagon Wheels— Wagon wheel shaped, great for casseroles
- Shells—Shell shaped pasta, larger ones for stuffing, others for salads
- Spaghetti/Spaghettini—Long, thin, rounded pasta
- Tortellini—Coiled, stuffed pasta noodle, means “navel” or belly-button
- Vermicelli—Thinner than spaghetti, means “little worms”, yum!
- Ziti—Medium sized tubular pasta perfect for casseroles, baking

There are many, many more....