

HOME ECONOMICS GUIDE



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Using and Storing Process Cheese

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Most people cannot use 5 pounds of process cheese before it begins to mold or taste old. To get the most food value from your process cheese—store it right.

How to Store Process Cheese

1. Open the 5-pound block of cheese.
2. If the surface is moldy, scraping it off does not make it safe. While some molds are not harmful on cheese, there are types of mold that produce a toxin (a type of poison) that may cause serious health problems. However, the toxins do not penetrate throughout the cheese. If small amounts of mold are present, **trim ½" beneath and beside the mold off of the cheese.** Unopened cheese showing extensive mold growth should be discarded or returned to the distributor.

Note: The exception to this guideline is that people with allergies to mold *should not* cut even small amounts of mold off cheese (or any other food) and use it.

No one should ever sniff mold because of the possibility of sending mold spores into the respiratory tract and perhaps causing serious illness. If the cheese has molded because it was not refrigerated, it is **NOT** safe to eat. Destroy the entire piece.

3. If not moldy, cut the 5-pound block into smaller blocks. A good sized block would be the amount you think you can use in one week.
4. Process cheese can be frozen for a short period of time—4 months in the freezer at 0°F, or not more than 2 months in the freezer compartment of your refrigerator.

Use these guidelines for freezing cheese.

- Blocks should be one pound or less and no more than one-inch thick.
- Package cheese for freezing in one of the following:
 1. heavy-duty aluminum foil
 2. plastic freezer paper with freezer tape
 3. freezer bags
- If one of these is not available, regular aluminum foil could be used. Quality will not be as good.



Do not use waxed paper, plastic wrap or plastic sandwich wrap.

- Thaw frozen cheese in the refrigerator.

Disadvantage of freezing cheese—

- Frozen cheese has a tendency to dry out and be crumbly so use in cooking for best results.
5. If there is no freezer space available, process cheese will keep 3-4 weeks in a refrigerator at 40°F. or below.

Process Cheese is Good for You

It is a good source of calcium and protein. It also contains fat, riboflavin and small amounts of other nutrients such as vitamin A, B₆, and B₁₂. Remember, process cheese contains about twice as much sodium (salt) as cheddar cheese, but the same amount of fat.

Cooking With Process Cheese

- Use low temperatures. High temperatures for long periods cause cheese to toughen and cause fat to separate out.
- Cheese will melt easier if grated or cut into small pieces.
- Thoroughly chilled cheese is easier to slice and grate.
- One pound of cheese makes about four cups of grated cheese.

Use Process Cheese in Meals

Process cheese is easy to use.

- Slice it for sandwiches or hamburgers.
- Make cheese toast for breakfast.
- Grate it for use in salads, cooked vegetables, casseroles and scrambled eggs, or on top of soups and tacos.
- Add to biscuit dough or slice and place inside hot biscuits.
- Eat it with fruit or crackers as a snack or dessert.
- Or, use in one of the following recipes.

Tamale Pie

1 pound ground beef
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped green pepper
2 8-ounce cans tomato sauce
1 12-ounce can (1½ c.) whole kernel corn, drained
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 to 3 teaspoons chili powder
1½ cup grated cheese
Dash pepper

Cook meat, onion and green pepper in a large skillet until meat is lightly browned and vegetables are tender. Stir in tomato sauce, corn, garlic, sugar, salt, chili powder, and pepper. Simmer 20 to 25 minutes, or until thick. Add cheese; stir until melted. Turn into greased 9 x 9 x 2" baking dish.

Make Cornmeal Topper: Stir ¾ cup cornmeal and ½ teaspoon salt into 2 cups cold water. Cook and stir until thick. Add 1 tablespoon margarine; mix well. Spoon over hot meat mixture. Bake casserole in moderate oven (375°F.) about 40 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Macaroni and Cheese

2 quarts of water
2 teaspoons salt
1 cup macaroni
3 cups white sauce
1 cup grated cheese
½ cup bread crumbs

Grease casserole dish. Cook macaroni until tender. Layer with white sauce and cheese. Garnish with crumbs. Bake 15 minutes at 375°F.

Rice With Cheese and Tomatoes

Cook: 1 cup rice or have ready 3 cups leftover cooked rice

Saute: 3 tablespoons fat or oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
3 stalks celery, chopped

Add: 2 cups cooked tomatoes
cooked rice
2 cups shredded cheese
1 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper

Cover and simmer until cheese is melted. Serves 6.

Cheese Chowder

2 medium carrots, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
½ cup water
2 tablespoons margarine
¼ cup flour
4 cups milk
1½ cup cut-up cheese

Bring water to boil; add chopped vegetables. Cover and cook until tender. Do not drain. In separate saucepan melt margarine over low heat; add flour and stir into a smooth paste. Slowly stir in milk. Cook and stir until thick. Add cheese and cooked vegetables. Cook over low heat until cheese melts. Serve hot. Serves 6.

Cheese Sauce

4 tablespoons butter or margarine
¼ cup flour
¾ teaspoon salt
2 cups milk
1½ cups cheese, cut in small pieces

Melt butter in a boiler. Take boiler from heat. Add flour. Stir until it is smooth. Add salt and stir. Add milk to flour mixture. Add a little at a time. Stir until there are no lumps. Cook over medium heat until it is thick. Stir all the time it cooks. Cut cheese in small pieces. Add to sauce. Stir. Makes 2 cups of sauce.

Cheese sauce is good on rice, spaghetti, toast, potatoes, broccoli, and cabbage.