

Bolognese

This tasty recipe has been put together by Tom, our Healthy Habits Coordinator, with a little help from his daughter. For more great health and wellbeing tips from Tom and the Healthy Habits team, call us on 0191 280 8484 or email Rebecca.Williams@ageuknorthtyneside.org.uk.

Variations

- You can swap the beef mince for veggie mince substitutes.
- You can add chilli or wine according to your preference.
- You can then use the bolognese mix to make a lasagne with not much extra prep time.

Kit

- Chopping board and knives
- Small blender (optional)
- Frying pan and spoon
- Pan for boiling pasta and a drainer

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 4 rashers smoked streaky bacon, finely chopped (optional)
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, trimmed and finely chopped
- 2 celery sticks, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves finely chopped
- 2-3 sprigs rosemary leaves picked and finely chopped
- 750g beef mince (or a vegetarian alternative)



For the bolognese sauce

- 2 x 400g tins plum tomatoes or passata (I use one 500g pack of passata so it isn't too "tomatoey" for my little girl)
- Small pack basil leaves picked, $\frac{3}{4}$ finely chopped and the rest left whole for garnish
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 2 tbsp. tomato purée (or tomato ketchup)
- 1 beef stock cube/pot
- 1 red chilli de-seeded and finely chopped (optional)
- 125ml red wine (optional)
- 6 cherry tomatoes sliced in half (optional)

To season and serve

- 400g spaghetti
- 75g parmesan grated, plus extra to serve (optional)
- Crusty or garlic bread to serve (optional)

Method

Step 1

- Put a large saucepan on a medium heat and add 1 tbsp. olive oil.

Step 2

- Add 4 finely chopped bacon rashers and fry until golden and crisp.

Step 3

- Reduce the heat and add the 2 onions, 2 carrots, 2 celery sticks, 2 garlic cloves and the leaves from 2-3 sprigs of rosemary, all finely chopped, then fry for 10 mins. Stir the veg often until it softens.

Step 4

- Increase the heat to medium-high, add 500g beef mince and cook stirring for 3-4 mins until the meat is browned all over.

Step 5

- Add 2 tins plum tomatoes, the finely chopped leaves from $\frac{3}{4}$ small pack basil, 1 tsp. dried oregano, 2 bay leaves, 2 tbsp. tomato purée, 1 beef stock cube, 1 de-seeded and finely chopped red chilli (if using), 125ml red wine and 6 halved cherry tomatoes. Stir with a wooden spoon, breaking up the plum tomatoes.

Step 6

- Bring to the boil, reduce to a gentle simmer and cover with a lid. Cook whilst stirring occasionally, until you have a rich, thick sauce.

Step 7

- Add the 75g grated parmesan, check the seasoning and stir.

Step 8

- When the bolognese is nearly finished, cook 400g spaghetti following the pack instructions.

Step 9

- Drain the spaghetti and either stir into the bolognese sauce, or serve the sauce on top. Serve with more grated parmesan, the remaining basil leaves and crusty bread, if you like.

Chef's tip: Try to split the bolognese into equal portions and freeze the remaining portions separately in the freezer so that you have a healthy ready meal for when you are tired. Probably won't work if you have already added the Parmesan but you can still Tupperware it up and save in the fridge for ready meals.



Turn your
bolognese into
a tasty lasagne