

Helergon Kitchen

# Pesto Pasta Salad – Easy Weeknight Dinner

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **15 min** Prep time | **10 min** Cook time | **25 min** Total time |
| **4** Servings | **Easy** Difficulty | **Italian** Cuisine |

## Ingredients

### Main Ingredients

- [ ] 12 oz fusilli or bow-tie pasta
- [ ] 2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- [ ] 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic
- [ ] 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- [ ] 2 tbsp lemon juice
- [ ] 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- [ ] 1/2 cup diced cucumber
- [ ] Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

## Instructions

1. Cook the pasta in salted water until al dente, about 8-10 minutes. Drain and rinse briefly under cold water to stop cooking.
2. While the pasta cools, combine basil, Parmesan, pine nuts, garlic, lemon juice, and olive oil in a food processor. Blend until smooth; creamy pasta salad tip: pause and scrape sides for even texture.
3. Place the cooled pasta in a large bowl, pour over the pesto, and toss until every piece is lightly coated.
4. Add the halved cherry tomatoes and diced cucumber. Season with salt, pepper, and an extra drizzle of olive oil if needed. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving.

### Nutrition per serving

| 420 kcal | 12 g | 48 g | 18 g |
|---|---|---|---|
| Calories | Protein | Carbs | Fat |

> **Tips & notes**
> - If the pesto looks thick, thin it with a tablespoon of warm water or more lemon juice.
> - For a nuttier flavor, toast pine nuts longer but watch closely to avoid bitterness.
> - This salad can be made a day ahead; the flavors meld beautifully.