Easy Mac and Cheese

**Ingredients**

- 2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups dry macaroni/elbow pasta
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Optional:
- Can use any type of cheese, or use try a combination of your favorite cheeses!
- Add seasonings such as garlic powder, paprika and cayenne pepper
- Add 1-2 teaspoons of mustard (regular, spicy, or Dijon) for a deeper flavor
- Can replace milk with ¾ cup evaporated milk

**Easy Add-Ins and Toppers:**
- Proteins such as chicken, beef, ham, tuna, or hot dogs
- Crumbled bacon or bacon bits
- Veggies such as steamed broccoli, peas, or mushrooms
- Breadcrumbs or crushed crackers/cracker crumbs—top the mac and cheese with breadcrumbs or crushed crackers after it is done cooking, then pop in the oven for a couple minutes to get a crispy coating
- Herbs such as cilantro and parsley
- Tomatoes, salsa, and diced jalapeños
- Sauce it up with sriracha, hot sauce, or ranch dressing

**Prep:**

**Prep Time:** 5 minutes

**Cook:**

**Cook Time:** 20 minutes

1. Bring a large/medium pot of water to a boil. Pour the pasta into the boiling water and cook for 8-9 minutes.
2. Drain the pasta and set aside.
3. In the same pot, melt butter over medium-low heat and add the drained pasta back into the pot. Stir together until butter is completely melted.
4. Add the milk to the pasta, stir until combined.
5. Slowly add the cheese to the pasta. Continuously stir the pasta until the cheese is melted. Add any spices, seasonings, and sauces here. If the pasta looks dry, add more milk or water.
6. Stir continuously until the sauce is smooth and thicker.
7. Salt and pepper to taste.
8. Serve and Enjoy!

**Cooking Options:**

- Instead of boiling the pasta in water, combine the dry pasta and 2 cups of milk to a pot and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce heat to low and let it simmer for about 10 minutes, or until pasta is tender. Stir often so that the pasta doesn’t stick to the pan.
- Once the pasta is soft and has absorbed the milk, remove from heat and add the cheese and any additional spices, seasonings, and sauces here.