

Treasure Barrel

Broccoli Cheese Casserole: Creamy & Delicious Recipe

20 min Prep time	**30 min** Cook time	**50 min** Total time
8 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**American** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Casserole

- [ ] 6 cups fresh broccoli florets (about 1.5 lbs)
- [ ] 3 tbsp unsalted butter
- [ ] 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- [ ] 2 cups whole milk
- [ ] 4 oz cream cheese, softened and cubed
- [ ] 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- [ ] 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- [ ] Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- [ ] 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided

For the Topping

- [ ] 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- [ ] 1 tbsp melted butter

Instructions

1. Let's begin by preparing our star ingredient. Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C) and lightly grease a 9x13 inch baking dish. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and prepare a bowl of ice water on the side. Gently place your broccoli florets into the boiling water and blanch for just 1-2 minutes until they turn a brilliant bright green. Immediately transfer them to the ice bath to stop the cooking process, then drain them very well. This little step is so key to keeping that perfect texture and color.

2. Now, we'll build the creamy sauce. In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, melt the 3 tablespoons of butter over medium heat. Add your chopped onion and sauté until it becomes soft and translucent, which usually takes about 5-7 minutes. The kitchen will start to smell amazing! Add the minced garlic and cook for just another minute until it's fragrant—be careful not to let it brown. Sprinkle the flour over the onions and whisk constantly for about a minute to cook out that raw flour taste. This is your roux, the foundation of your beautiful sauce.

3. Slowly, and I mean slowly, begin to pour in the milk while whisking continuously. This patient pouring and whisking is what prevents lumps and creates a silky-smooth base. Continue to cook, stirring often, until the sauce thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, maybe 5-8 minutes. Turn the heat down to low and whisk in the softened cream cheese until it melts completely. Add the Dijon, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper. Finally, remove the pan from the heat and stir in 1 ½ cups of the shredded cheddar cheese until it's melted and glorious. Just look at that liquid gold!

4 It's time to bring it all together. Gently fold the well-drained broccoli florets into your cheese sauce, making sure each piece is lovingly coated. Pour this mixture evenly into your prepared baking dish. In a small bowl, toss the panko breadcrumbs with the melted butter. Sprinkle this mixture, along with the remaining ½ cup of cheddar cheese, over the top of the casserole. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the casserole is hot and bubbly and the top is a beautiful golden brown. Let it rest for a few minutes before serving; it's so worth the wait.

Nutrition per serving

380 kcal	18 g	15 g	28 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- To ensure your casserole isn't watery, it is absolutely crucial to drain your blanched broccoli very, very well. I like to spread it out on a clean kitchen towel for a few minutes to let any excess water evaporate. Every little drop counts!
- Feel free to customize this dish. A pinch of nutmeg in the cheese sauce is a classic addition that adds a lovely warmth. You could also stir in some sautéed mushrooms with the onions for another layer of earthy flavor.
- For the crispiest topping, make sure the breadcrumbs are tossed well in the melted butter. This helps them toast evenly to a perfect golden brown in the oven, providing that wonderful textural contrast to the creamy interior.