

Treasure Barrel

Easy Shepherd's Pie Casserole: Classic Comfort Food

25 min Prep time	**35 min** Cook time	**1 h** Total time
6 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**British** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Potato Topping

- [ ] 2 lbs russet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- [ ] 1/2 cup warm milk
- [ ] 4 tbsp butter
- [ ] 1/2 tsp salt
- [ ] 1/4 tsp black pepper

For the Beef Filling

- [ ] 1 1/2 lbs ground beef
- [ ] 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- [ ] 2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- [ ] 1 tbsp tomato paste
- [ ] 1 cup beef broth
- [ ] 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- [ ] Salt and pepper to taste

Optional Toppings

- [ ] 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- [ ] 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

Instructions

1. Start by preparing the potatoes. Place the peeled and cubed potatoes in a large pot and cover with cold salted water. Bring to a boil and cook until fork-tender, about 15-20 minutes. While the potatoes cook, warm the milk gently - I usually microwave it for 30 seconds until it's just warm to the touch. Drain the potatoes well and return them to the hot pot to steam dry for a minute. This helps them absorb the butter and milk better.

   Mash the potatoes with the butter, warm milk, salt, and pepper until smooth but still with some texture. I like to leave them a bit rustic rather than perfectly smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning - the potatoes should be delicious on their own since they're the star of the topping. Set them aside while you prepare the filling.

2 Now for the beef filling. Heat a large oven-safe skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the ground beef, breaking it up with a wooden spoon as it browns. Cook until nicely browned and cooked through, about 8-10 minutes. I like to get some good caramelization on the beef for extra flavor.

Remove the beef with a slotted spoon, leaving about a tablespoon of drippings in the pan. Add the chopped onion and carrots to the same pan and cook until softened, about 5-7 minutes. The vegetables will pick up all those delicious beef flavors from the pan. Add the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.

Return the beef to the pan and stir in the tomato paste, coating everything evenly. Pour in the beef broth and Worcestershire sauce, then add the fresh thyme. Bring to a simmer and let it cook for about 5 minutes until the liquid has reduced slightly but the mixture is still moist. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

3 Time to assemble! If you're not using an oven-safe skillet, transfer the beef mixture to a 9x13 inch baking dish. Spread it evenly across the bottom. Let the filling cool for about 5-10 minutes - this helps prevent the potato topping from sinking in.

Dollop spoonfuls of the mashed potatoes over the beef mixture, then gently spread them to cover the entire surface. I don't worry about making it perfectly smooth - those rustic peaks and swirls will brown beautifully. If you're adding cheese, sprinkle it evenly over the potatoes.

Use a fork to create some texture on the potato surface - this isn't just pretty, it creates more surface area for browning. Make sure the potatoes seal the edges to prevent the filling from bubbling up. The casserole is now ready for baking!

4 Preheat your oven to 375°F. Place the casserole on a baking sheet to catch any potential drips. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until the filling is bubbling around the edges and the potato topping is golden brown with some darker crispy spots.

If you want extra browning, you can broil for the last 2-3 minutes, but watch carefully as it can burn quickly. Remove from the oven and let it rest for at least 10 minutes before serving - this allows the filling to set so you get nice clean slices.

Garnish with fresh parsley if using. Serve hot, scooping down to the bottom to get all those beautiful layers in each serving. The contrast between the crispy potato topping and savory beef filling is pure comfort food heaven.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	28 g	28 g	22 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- For extra flavor, try browning the ground beef in batches rather than all at once - this prevents steaming and gives better caramelization
- If your potatoes seem too wet after mashing, let them sit in the hot pot for a few minutes to evaporate excess moisture
- The filling can be made up to 2 days ahead - store refrigerated and bring to room temperature before assembling
- Leftovers reheat beautifully in a 350°F oven for about 20 minutes - often better than microwave reheating
- For a gluten-free version, ensure your Worcestershire sauce and beef broth are gluten-free brands
- If you're short on time, frozen diced potatoes can be used for the topping - just thaw and pat dry before mashing