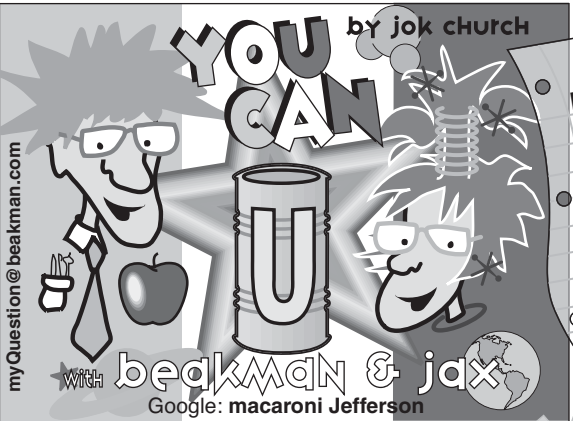


YOU CAN

by jok church



WITH beakman & jax

Google: macaroni Jefferson

Homemade Pasta

WHAT YOU NEED: 2/3 cup flour - pinch salt - 1 egg mixed up with a fork - rolling pin - permission from your family to make a wonderful mess

WHAT TO DO: Make a little hill with the flour and dig a crater at the top, like a volcano. Put the salt and the egg in the crater and chop into the hill with a fork. Start kneading it with your fingers and keep doing it until you get a ball of dough that isn't at all sticky. If the dough is too stiff to work, add a teaspoon of water.

Dear Jax,

How do you make pasta?

Craig Linton
Dublin, Ohio

Beakman or Jax
1130 Walnut Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
Questions, name & address

MORE STUFF:

Let the ball sit for a 1/2 hour. Spread some flour on a cutting board. Put the dough on the flour. Use the rolling pin to really flatten the ball. Use a butter knife to cut the thin dough into long strips. If you want, trim them to any length you like. Cover with a clean kitchen towel until they dry.

Dear Craig,

Just a few years ago, people called this *noodles, or macaroni*.

Now that we see ourselves as more *global*, people say *pasta* (PAH-stah) – which might really mean paste, which would make sense because most pasta is made with the same recipe as wheat paste – the kind you use to glue pieces of paper together.

And you don't really need a machine to make pasta, no matter how global a pasta machine might seem.

Jax Place
Jax Place

SO WHAT:

Ask a grown-up to boil your dried pasta. Serve them in soup or with a bit of melted butter and garlic!

Your pasta is held together by long strings of a protein in wheat called *gluten* (GLOO-ten). Gluten absorbs a lot of water, but is not dissolved in water. When you knead gluten, it's a lot like you're tangling up fishing line into a big, knotted and very strong mess. These tangled strings are what gives pasta (and wheat paste) its strength.

ABOUT THE EGG:

The eggs in your pasta gave you color, fat and water. Machine-made pasta doesn't need eggs. Machines can knead the gluten better. Machines can make pasta with just flour and water – or vegetable juices, which is where all that colored pasta comes from.

The flour in most pasta is a special hard wheat harvested in Italy's Po River Valley along Italy's longest river. Find it on a globe running across northern Italy, from the Alps to the Adriatic Sea.

PASTA NAME TRANSLATIONS:

Sometimes it's better not to translate Italian. Like opera lyrics, pasta names can be humbled by translation into less-fancy English:

cannelloni	little tubes
fettuccine	little ribbons
lasagne	big bank notes/paper money
linguine	little tongues
manicotti	pipes
mostaccioli	little mustaches
ravioli	little turnips
rigatoni	little grooves
spaghetti	little strings
vermicelli	little worms