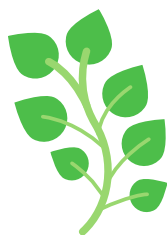


# Pesto Possibilities



Adapted from "Pesto: Pantry Possibilities" by  
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Pesto is an easy, nutritious addition to a dish. The best part? It can be almost anything you want it to be. You can choose the flavors you want to highlight, add, and subtract. The chart below compares a traditional pesto with the variety of options you could choose to create your own:

Traditional Pesto	Substitutions and Other Options
<b>Nuts / Protein</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>small handful raw or roasted pine nuts</li> </ul>	<b>Nuts / Protein</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any other variety of nut you choose (cashews, pistachios, walnut... etc.)</li> <li>cooked or canned beans, rinsed and drained (great northern / white beans, chickpeas / garbanzo beans... etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>nutrition tip: if you have a nut allergy, or simply don't prefer them, try adding beans for protein</b></p>
<b>Greens / Vegetables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 large bunch basil (leaves only)</li> <li>3 cloves garlic</li> </ul>	<b>Greens / Vegetables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any leafy green of choice (spinach – fresh or frozen, arugula, spring mix, etc.)</li> <li>fresh or frozen peas</li> <li>fresh, frozen, or canned items like tomatoes and peppers</li> <li>forage for seasonal greens in your yard, like chickweed, purslane, and redbud (note: consult an expert and wash plants and produce before consumption)</li> </ul> <p><b>nutrition tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>you can use any combination of items from either column; you don't have to pick just one!</b></li> <li><b>choose flavors you like most</b></li> <li><b>note: if you prefer thicker sauces beware that some items, like fresh tomatoes and peppers, will add more liquid to your mixture when blended</b></li> </ul>
<b>Cheese</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>about ¾ cup loosely packed grated parmesan</li> </ul>	<b>Cheese</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any DRY grated cheese you choose (pecorino is a good substitute)</li> </ul> <p><b>nutrition tip: for allergies, intolerance, or personal preference you can omit the cheese entirely and add more of your protein choice (above) OR use nutritional yeast as a substitute</b></p>
<b>Oil and Spice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 to 3 Tbsp olive oil (or more to taste)</li> </ul>	<b>Oil and Spice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any additional spices you'd like to complement your pesto (try a pinch of salt, ¾ tsp cracked black pepper, and a sprinkling of red pepper flakes to give it some kick)</li> <li>note: oil may not be necessary, unless desired for flavor, particularly if you've used an ingredient that has added more moisture to your pesto, such as fresh or canned tomato or fresh, frozen, or canned peppers</li> </ul>





## BLEND

Blend or process your items to a paste-like consistency. You can add more liquid if you would like a soupier consistency (water or more olive oil). If you have a soupy consistency and you would like to thicken your pesto, try adding more nuts, beans, cheese, or nutritional yeast (or any combination of these).

## TIP: TASTE AS YOU GO

Don't be afraid to sample a little spoonful while you're completing your pesto. This will help you discover your preferred consistency and flavor combination.

## ADD TO YOUR DISH

Another testament to pesto's versatility is the variety of ways in which you can use it. You can toss your prepared pasta, gnocchi, and rice in it (choose whole grain and brown whenever possible). You can top your prepared meat with it; steak, fish and seafood, and chicken. You can marinate and sear your meat using the pesto. You can coat raw vegetables in it and roast them OR roast your vegetables first and add the pesto as a fresh sauce. You can use pesto as a salad dressing or a dip, as a pizza sauce or spread on sandwiches. Explore and be creative. The possibilities for enjoying your pesto are endless!

## STORAGE

The combination of garlic and oil requires specific attention to **food safety**. It is important to refrigerate any unused portion of pesto immediately under 38°F in a clean jar and to use it within three days. You may also choose to freeze your unused pesto immediately for more long term storage. Before serving, remember to thaw it in the refrigerator to keep it safe for consumption. Another **food safety** option is to add your garlic to your pesto last, immediately before serving.

