

Dining Out

Tips for Eating Pasta

Pasta can be a wonderful dish, but some shapes—like spaghetti and linguini—can be tricky to eat. Here are a few tips that can help.

First, if you're concerned that a dish might be messy, ask whether it can be made with a different type of pasta. Smaller shapes like rotini, penne, or shells can be easier to pick up on a fork or spoon.

If you are served pasta in longer shapes, twirling the strands onto your fork can make it much neater and easier to eat. Here's how:

- Begin by turning your fork so the tines are pointing downward, then lower it down to your plate, aiming for the outer edge of the pasta itself.
- Find three or four strands with your fork, then twirl the fork. Keep it pointed downward as the pasta wraps around the tines.
- If your pasta has been served in a bowl, twirl your fork against the inside rim of the bowl. That helps you stay in one place and avoid getting too much pasta at once.

- If your pasta has been served on a plate, pick up a few strands with your fork, and hold your spoon with your other hand. Then twirl the fork in the bowl of the spoon, until the pasta is wrapped around the tines.
- The spoon technique is also helpful if your pasta sauce is runny. After you've twirled the pasta onto your fork, keep the utensils together while you tip the spoon sideways, then lift and lower them a just a few inches, two or three times. That helps any extra sauce run onto the plate before you take a bite.

It's handy to practice these techniques at home, on pasta without sauce. You can even feel the strands with your hand to see how much you have, until you get used to how a bite-sized amount feels, by weight.

Note that you might need to add a little water, to make sure the pasta doesn't stick together.

Once you feel comfortable with the technique, try it with sauce, too.