

# 69 - Noodles

Did you know that there are over 1000 different kinds of noodles? But what are noodles, where did they come from and are they healthy?

There are over 1000 different noodle types/shapes. That's a lotta pasta! But each pasta shape has its own specific purpose. Think about lasagna. Lasagna noodles are wide and sturdy to hold up to layers of sauce, meat and cheese! Some noodles act as a platform for sauce, while others, like ravioli, trap ingredients inside of them. Some noodles, like ziti, penne or elbows have holes in it so sauce can get inside. While others like shells or manicotti can be individually stuffed with cheese.

So how do they make so many shapes? Simple. Pasta dough is loaded into a machine called a pasta extruder and squeezed out like toothpaste through what's known as a die. A die is just a cut-out of whatever shape you want the pasta to be -- just like a cookie mold. The more times you run the dough through the machine, the longer and thinner you can make it.

## What You Will Learn

1. When were noodles invented and in what country/countries?
2. Why are there so many different kinds of noodles?
3. What are noodles made of? Are they healthy?

## Activities

1. Time to play with your food and do a STEM activity! Ask an adult to help you gather some marshmallows and spaghetti for [this](#) building activity.
2. Pasta comes in many different shapes and sizes, making it perfect for art! Check out [this](#) website for instructions on how to dye your own pasta for art projects! Are you going to make your own original creation or are you going to make a version of a famous piece of art?
3. Time to eat! Many cultures have some form of pasta. What is your favorite kind? Talk with an adult in your family and help plan a family meal with noodles! It could be as simple as mac and cheese or you could learn how to make pasta from scratch!

## Additional Resources

Check out [this](#) video from PBS showing how pasta is made! Would you like to make pasta by hand or do you think it would be gross to touch all of the ingredients? What is your favorite kind of pasta?

## Kid News

Have you ever tried to send a secret message? Did you use a secret code, hide the note, or use a special ink? People have been trying to keep their messages safe for a long time, often folding their messages in special ways so other people can't read them. Sometimes, scientists find these letters and try to read them without opening them. Using modern imaging, they can often piece together the message, letting them understand what life was like a long time ago. Read about secret messages [here](#).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This activity guide is for the Who Smarted? podcast [www.WhoSmarted.com](http://www.WhoSmarted.com)