

HOMEMADE ORECCHIETTE PASTA

Cooking Times + Servings

- **Prep time:** 35 minutes
 - **Rest time:** 15 minutes
 - **Total time:** 50 minutes
 - **Servings:** 4 (as a first course)
 - **Yield:** about 1 lb fresh pasta
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Ingredients

- **1 2/3 cups** durum wheat semolina flour, **fine** (semola rimacinata)
- **3/4 cup + 1 Tbsp** warm water (tiepida, not hot)
- **1/2 tsp** fine salt (plus more for the cooking water)

Tip: If your semolina is very fine and thirsty, you may need an extra teaspoon or two of water—add it slowly.

Instructions

1) Warm the water

Warm the water until it's pleasantly warm to the touch (not hot). Stir in the **1/2 tsp fine salt**.

2) Make the dough

On a wooden board (or clean counter), mound the semolina and make a well in the center. Pour in the warm salted water a little at a time, using your fingers to draw flour into the water until a shaggy dough forms.

3) Knead

Knead with your hands for **8–10 minutes**, until the dough is smooth, elastic, and no longer crumbly. If it feels dry, wet your hands and keep kneading; if sticky, dust lightly with semolina.

4) Rest

Shape into a ball, cover with a clean towel (or wrap), and let rest at room temperature for **15 minutes**.

5) Roll and cut

Cut off a portion of dough (keep the rest covered). Roll it into a rope about **3/8 inch thick** (roughly 1 cm). Cut into small pieces about **3/8 inch** each.

6) Shape the orecchiette

Lightly dust the board with semolina. Using a smooth, non-serrated knife:

- Press the knife into a piece and **drag it toward you** to create a small shell.
- Flip it over onto your thumb to form the classic “ear” shape (thicker rim, thinner center).

Repeat with the remaining dough.

7) Cook

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it generously. Cook fresh orecchiette for **4–6 minutes**, until tender but still pleasantly chewy. Drain and toss immediately with your sauce.

Tips & Tricks

- **Best flour choice:** Look for “**durum wheat semolina flour, fine**” (often labeled *semola rimacinata*). Coarser semolina works, but shaping is easier with fine.
 - **Dough feel matters:** It should be firm and smooth—never sticky. Humidity affects semolina a lot.
 - **Speed trick:** Shape on a wooden board for better grip; too-smooth counters can make pieces slide.
 - **Even cooking:** Try to keep thickness consistent—thicker orecchiette need an extra minute.
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How to Store

- **Drying:** Lay orecchiette in a single layer under a dry towel at room temp until fully dry. Store in an airtight container for up to **1 month**.
- **Freezing:** Freeze on a tray until solid, then transfer to freezer bags. Cook from frozen, adding **1–2 minutes**.