



Cowboy Tater Tot Hotdish Recipe

A Dish for Hungry Cowboys

This hotdish is a real lifesaver on a busy night. It fills up hungry bellies with no fuss. I think of it as food for modern-day cowboys.

My grandson once ate three helpings. He sat back and said, I'm full as a tick. I still laugh at that. This meal is pure comfort.

Why This Meal Matters

This is more than just dinner on a plate. It is about bringing everyone together. A shared meal can turn a bad day right around.

It also teaches you to use what you have. Cans, frozen things, fresh veggies. They all work together. That is a good lesson for life, don't you think?

Let's Talk Flavor

You get a little bit of everything in one bite. The savory beef, the sweet corn, the smoky bacon. Doesn't that smell amazing when it bakes?

The best part is the tater tots on top. They get all golden and crispy in the oven. That crunch with the creamy filling is just perfect.

A Little Story for You

I first had this at a church potluck years ago. A nice man named Joe brought it. He called it his cowboy special.

I asked him for the recipe right away. He wrote it on a napkin for me. I have made it my own way ever since. What is a recipe you got from a friend?

Time to Get Cooking

This recipe is very forgiving. Do not like mushrooms? Leave them out. Have some leftover chicken? Toss it in. Cooking should be fun, not stressful.

Fun fact: The word hotdish is used a lot in the Midwest. It just means a warm, baked casserole. Now you know!

Your Turn in the Kitchen

I would love to hear from you. What is your favorite cozy dinner for a cold night? Does your family have a special casserole too?

Tell me, what is the one ingredient you always add to make a meal your own? I always add an extra sprinkle of pepper. I cannot wait to hear your ideas.



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Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Ground beef	1 pound	
Yellow onion	1 medium (about 1 ¼ cup), diced	
Mushrooms	1 can (4 ounces) chopped, or 8 ounces freshly sliced	
Green bell pepper	1	seeded and diced
Garlic	1 teaspoon	minced
Condensed cream of mushroom soup	1 can (10.5 ounces)	
Corn kernels	1 can (15.25 ounces)	drained
Black beans	1 can (15 ounces)	drained and rinsed
Petite diced tomatoes	1 can (15.25 ounces)	drained
Bacon	8 slices	cooked and crumbled
Sour cream	¼ cup (57.5 g)	
Whole milk	½ cup (122.5 g)	
Kosher salt	1 teaspoon	
Black pepper	¼ teaspoon	
Tater tots	1 package (32 ounces)	frozen
Seasoned salt	1 ½ teaspoons	



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My Cowboy Supper Under a Tater Tot Sky

This hotdish always makes me smile. It reminds me of my grandson's cowboy phase. He'd wear his hat at the dinner table. This meal was his favorite after a long day of pretend ranching. It's a cozy, filling supper that brings everyone together. Doesn't that smell amazing?

See also Cheesy Enchilada Chili Fusion Delight

Let's get our big skillet ready. This recipe is like building a tasty tower. We start with a good, strong base. Then we pile on all the yummy stuff. We finish with a crunchy tater tot roof. I still laugh at that.

- **Step 1:** First, warm up your oven to 375 degrees. Grab your big skillet and give it a quick spray. We brown the ground beef in there. Use your spoon to break it up into little pieces. It should take about five minutes. (A hard-learned tip: drain the extra grease. It makes your hotdish less oily and more delicious.)
- **Step 2:** Now, toss in your onion, mushrooms, and green pepper. I love the sizzle they make. Cook them until they get soft and the beef is done. Then stir in the garlic for just thirty seconds. Oh, that smell is just wonderful. It makes the whole kitchen feel like home.
- **Step 3:** Here comes the fun part. Mix in the soup, corn, beans, and tomatoes. Don't forget the bacon, sour cream, and milk. Add your salt and pepper too. Let it all bubble together for a few minutes. It gets thick and creamy. **What's your favorite canned veggie to add? Share below!**
- **Step 4:** Time for the best part, the tater tots! Arrange them neatly over the beef mixture. I like to make straight lines. Sprinkle the seasoned salt over the top. This gives the tots a little extra zing. Now it's ready for its oven nap.
- **Step 5:** Bake it for about 40 minutes. You'll know it's done when it's

bubbly. The tater tots will be golden brown and crispy. Let it sit for a few minutes before you serve it. This keeps everyone from burning their tongues. I learned that the hard way!

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour

Yield: 12 servings

Category: Dinner, Main Course

Three Fun Twists on Our Cowboy Dish

This recipe is like a good friend. It's always happy to change things up. You can make it your own. Here are a few ideas I've tried over the years. They always bring a little surprise to the table.

- **The Trailblazer:** Swap the beef for ground turkey. It's a little lighter but just as tasty.
- **The Spicy Sheriff:** Add a chopped jalapeño with the peppers. It gives it a nice kick.
- **The Campfire Veggie:** Skip the meat. Use a whole extra can of black beans instead. It's so hearty.

See also Savory Oven-Baked Cowboy Chicken Bites

Which one would you try first? Comment below!

What to Serve With Your Hotdish

A meal this good needs some friends on the plate. I like to keep things simple. A crisp green salad is perfect on the side. It adds a fresh, cool crunch. A few pickle spears are nice too. Their tangy taste cuts through the richness.

For drinks, a tall glass of cold milk is my go-to. It's a classic for a reason. For

the grown-ups, a frosty bottle of lager beer pairs nicely. It's refreshing with the savory flavors. **Which would you choose tonight?**



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Keeping Your Cowboy Hotdish Happy

Let's talk about storing this wonderful meal. It keeps well in the fridge for three days. Just cover it tightly with foil.

You can also freeze it for a later date. I freeze it in single-serving portions. This makes a quick lunch for a busy day.

I once gave a frozen portion to my grandson. He said it tasted just as good weeks later. Reheating is simple. Use your oven for the crispiest tater tots.

This matters because a good meal should never go to waste. It also means a warm dinner is always close by. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Hotdish Hiccups

Sometimes, the tater tots don't get crispy. Make sure your oven is fully heated first. A hot start makes all the difference.

If your filling seems too runny, let it simmer longer. I remember when mine was too soupy. A few extra minutes on the stove fixed it.

Do not skip draining the beef grease. This keeps your dish from being too oily. It makes the flavors cleaner and brighter.

Fixing small problems builds your cooking confidence. It also makes your food taste so much better. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

Your Cowboy Hotdish Questions Answered

Q: Can I make this gluten-free? A: Yes! Use a gluten-free cream of mushroom soup. Check your tater tots are gluten-free too.

See also [Balsamic Garlic Dijon Grilled Chicken Skewers](#)

Q: Can I make it ahead? A: Absolutely. Assemble it the night before. Keep it covered in the fridge until baking.

Q: What if I don't have an ingredient? A: No problem. Swap the beans for peas. Use a red pepper instead of green.

Q: Can I make a smaller portion? A: You can easily cut the recipe in half. Just use a smaller baking dish.

Q: Any extra tips? A: Let it rest for five minutes after baking. This helps everything set up nicely. **Which tip will you try first?**

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope you love this cozy hotdish as much as I do. It is a true family favorite at my house. Nothing makes me happier than sharing these recipes.

I would be so thrilled to see your creation. Show me your finished dish! **Have you tried this recipe? Tag us on Pinterest!**

Fun fact: The word “hotdish” is used mostly in the upper Midwest of the United States. I love that it has its own special name.

Happy cooking!

—Elowen Thorn.

You need to try this!



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Author: Elowen Thorn

Cooking Method: [Baking](#) [Stovetop](#)

Cuisine: [American](#)

Courses: [Dinner](#) [Main Course](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**



Prep time: **20 minutes**

Cook time: **50 minutes**

Rest time: **5 minutes**



Total time: **1 hour 15 minutes**



Servings: **12 servings**



Calories:**357 kcal**

Best Season:**Summer**

Description

A hearty and comforting casserole, perfect for a family dinner.

Ingredients

- ☐ 1 pound ground beef
- ☐ 1 medium yellow onion, diced (about 1 ¼ cup)
- ☐ 1 can (4 ounces) chopped mushrooms, or 8 ounces freshly sliced
- ☐ 1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
- ☐ 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- ☐ 1 can (10.5 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup
- ☐ 1 can (15.25 ounces) corn kernels, drained
- ☐ 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed
- ☐ 1 can (15.25 ounces) petite diced tomatoes, drained
- ☐ 8 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled into small pieces
- ☐ ¼ cup (57.5 g) sour cream
- ☐ ½ cup (122.5 g) whole milk
- ☐ 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ☐ ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ☐ 1 package (32 ounces) tater tots, frozen
- ☐ 1 ½ teaspoons seasoned salt

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F and spray a large, oven-safe skillet with nonstick cooking spray.
2. To the skillet over medium heat, add the ground beef and cook for 4-5 minutes, breaking up the meat with a spatula as you go.
3. Add the onions, mushrooms, and peppers. Cook until the beef is cooked through and the vegetables are softened (about 8 minutes).
4. Add the garlic and cook for 30 more seconds.
5. Drain any excess grease.
6. Mix in the cream of mushroom soup, corn kernels, black beans, diced tomatoes, bacon, sour cream, milk, salt, and pepper. Let simmer for 5-10

minutes, or until thickened.

7. Top with tater tots and seasoned salt.
8. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until hot and bubbly and the tater tots are crispy.
9. Remove from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes before serving.
Enjoy!

Notes

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