

Prep Time	15 minutes
Cook Time	10 minutes (bacon)
Chill Time	30 minutes (optional)
Total Time	25 minutes active / 55 minutes including chill
Skill Level	Easy
Servings	6 side-dish servings
Intensity	Low — no special equipment, minimal stovetop work
Cuisine	American (Midwestern potluck classic)

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Why You'll Love This Recipe

Bacon Pea Salad is the kind of dish that disappears first at every gathering. Sweet green peas, crispy smoky bacon, sharp cheddar, and crunchy red onion are tossed in a creamy, tangy dressing that ties it all together. It's refreshing enough for summer but hearty enough for a holiday table. Best of all, it uses mostly pantry and freezer staples, so you can make it any time of year.

Ingredients

For the Salad

- 4 cups frozen green peas (about 1 pound / 454 g), thawed but not cooked
- 8 slices bacon (about 8 oz / 225 g), cooked until crispy and crumbled
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, cubed into small ¼-inch pieces (about 4 oz / 115 g)
- ½ cup red onion, finely diced (about half a small onion)
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped (optional, for garnish)

For the Creamy Dressing

- ½ cup mayonnaise

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream
 - 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (or white vinegar)
 - 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
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Equipment Needed

- Large skillet (for bacon)
- Mixing bowl (large)
- Whisk or spoon
- Cutting board and knife

- Measuring cups and spoons
 - Airtight container for chilling
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Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Cook the Bacon (10 minutes | Medium heat)

Lay the bacon slices in a single layer in a cold large skillet. Turn the heat to medium and cook for 8–10 minutes, flipping once halfway through, until the bacon is deeply golden and crispy. (Starting in a cold pan renders the fat gradually and yields crispier bacon.) Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Once cool enough to handle, crumble into bite-sized pieces.

Tip: Reserve 1 teaspoon of bacon drippings if you'd like to whisk it into the dressing for extra smokiness.

Step 2: Thaw the Peas (5 minutes | No heat)

Place the frozen peas in a colander and run them under cool water for 2–3 minutes until thawed. Shake well to drain excess water, then pat dry with a clean kitchen towel. Dry peas are essential — excess water will make your salad soupy. Do not cook the peas; they should stay bright green and sweet.

Step 3: Make the Dressing (3 minutes | No heat)

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, sour cream, apple cider vinegar, sugar, salt, black pepper, and garlic powder until smooth and creamy. Taste and adjust seasoning — it should be tangy, lightly sweet, and well-salted.

Step 4: Assemble the Salad (5 minutes | No heat)

Add the drained peas, crumbled bacon (reserve a tablespoon for garnish), cubed cheddar, and diced red onion to the dressing. Gently fold everything together with a spatula until evenly coated. Avoid overmixing, which can smash the peas.

Step 5: Chill (30 minutes | Refrigerator)

Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes (up to 24 hours) to let the flavors meld. This step is optional but highly recommended — the salad tastes noticeably better after resting.

Step 6: Garnish and Serve (2 minutes | No heat)

Give the salad a gentle stir, taste once more for salt and pepper, then top with the reserved bacon and fresh parsley. Serve cold or lightly chilled.

Time & Intensity Summary

Phase	Time	Heat/Intensity
Bacon cooking	8–10 min	Medium stovetop
Pea thawing	2–3 min	No heat
Dressing	3 min	No heat
Assembly	5 min	No heat
Chilling	30 min	Refrigerator
Total active	~20 min	Low intensity

Nutrition Information (per serving)

Based on 6 servings. Values are estimates and will vary with brands and portion sizes.

Nutrient	Amount per Serving
Calories	~365 kcal
Total Fat	27 g
Saturated Fat	9 g
Cholesterol	45 mg
Sodium	620 mg
Total Carbohydrates	14 g
Dietary Fiber	4 g
Total Sugars	6 g
Protein	15 g
Vitamin C	~25% DV
Calcium	~15% DV
Iron	~8% DV