

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
 - Cook Time: 0 minutes
 - Chill Time: 30 minutes (recommended)
 - Total Time: 45 minutes
 - Yield: 4 generous sandwiches
 - Course: Lunch, Main Course
 - Cuisine: American
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Ingredients

For the Ham Salad:

- 1 lb (450g) cooked ham, roughly chopped (see notes for best ham choices)
- ½ cup mayonnaise (good quality, like Duke's or Hellmann's)
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish (or chopped bread-and-butter pickles)
- 1 stalk celery, finely diced (about 1/3 cup)
- 2 tablespoons red onion, finely minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika (optional, for depth)

- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- A dash of hot sauce (like Tabasco or Frank's RedHot), optional

For the Sandwiches:

- 8 slices of your favorite bread (soft white, whole wheat, sourdough, or rye all work well)
 - Lettuce leaves (such as butter lettuce or romaine)
 - Sliced tomato (optional)
 - Extra mayonnaise or mustard for spreading, if desired
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Equipment

- Food processor (or a very sharp knife and a cutting board)
- Mixing bowl
- Spatula

- Measuring cups and spoons
 - Butter knife for spreading
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Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Ham (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

The key to a great ham salad is the texture of the ham. You want it finely chopped, but not turned into a paste.

- Using a Food Processor: Cut the ham into 1-inch cubes. Place half the ham in the bowl of your food processor. Pulse 8-10 times in 1-second bursts. You want a coarse, crumbly texture, not a smooth puree. Stop and scrape down the sides if needed. Remove the pulsed ham to a large mixing bowl. Repeat with the remaining ham.
- Using a Knife: Finely chop the ham by hand until it's in small, pea-sized pieces. This takes a bit more elbow grease but gives you excellent control over the texture.

Step 2: Mix the Dressing (Time: 3 minutes | Intensity: Low)

In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, Dijon mustard, sweet pickle relish, garlic powder, smoked paprika (if using), and a dash of hot sauce. Stir until smooth. Taste the dressing and add salt and pepper as needed. Remember that the ham is salty, so go easy on the salt at this stage.

Step 3: Combine the Salad (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

To the bowl with the chopped ham, add the finely diced celery, minced red onion, and chopped parsley. Pour the dressing over the ham mixture. Using a spatula, gently fold everything together until the ham is evenly coated. Be careful not to overmix, or the salad can become mushy.

Step 4: Chill and Taste (Time: 30 minutes | Intensity: None)

While you *can* eat the ham salad immediately, it's much better after it has chilled for at least 30 minutes. This allows the flavors to meld and the salad to firm up slightly. After chilling, give it a final taste and adjust seasoning—you might want a little more pepper or a squeeze of lemon juice for brightness.

Step 5: Assemble the Sandwiches (Time: 2 minutes per sandwich | Intensity: Low)

- **Toast the Bread (Optional):** For extra texture, lightly toast the bread slices. This helps prevent the sandwich from becoming soggy.
- **Spread:** Lay out 4 slices of bread. If desired, spread a thin layer of mayonnaise or mustard on each slice.
- **Pile on the Ham Salad:** Spoon a generous $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the ham salad onto each slice of bread. Use the back of the spoon to spread it out slightly.
- **Add Toppings:** Top with a crisp lettuce leaf and a slice or two of tomato, if using.
- **Close and Serve:** Place the remaining bread slices on top. Press down gently. Cut the

sandwiches in half diagonally and serve immediately.

Recipe Notes & Variations

- **Best Ham for Ham Salad:** This is a fantastic way to use leftover baked ham. If you don't have leftovers, a thick-slice smoked ham from the deli counter is excellent. Avoid thinly shaved ham, as it won't chop well. You can also use canned ham (like Spam) in a pinch, but the flavor will be different.
 - **Texture is Key:** Do not over-process the ham in the food processor. Pulse it in short bursts to maintain a meaty texture. The same goes for the celery and onion—finely dice them by hand for the best crunch.
 - **Add-ins:** For a different flavor profile, try adding a tablespoon of drained, chopped capers, a tablespoon of chopped fresh dill, or a quarter cup of shredded cheddar cheese.
 - **Make-Ahead:** The ham salad can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. It's a great make-ahead lunch option. Do not assemble the sandwiches until you're ready to eat.
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Nutrition Information (Estimated)

Serving: 1 sandwich (with 2 slices of white bread, 1/2 cup ham salad, 1 lettuce leaf)

Calories: 480

Total Fat: 28g

Saturated Fat: 7g

Cholesterol: 65mg

Sodium: 1250mg

Total Carbohydrates: 32g

Dietary Fiber: 3g

Total Sugars: 4g

Protein: 22g