

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 0 minutes
- Total Time: 15 minutes (plus 30 minutes chilling time recommended)
- Yield: 4 servings
- Intensity Level: Easy (No cooking required; simple chopping, measuring, and mixing)

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Kitchen Equipment Needed

- Large mixing bowl
- Small mixing bowl or liquid measuring cup
- Wire whisk
- Silicone spatula or large mixing spoon
- Colander or fine-mesh strainer (for draining tuna and thawing peas)
- Chef's knife and cutting board

Ingredients

For the Creamy Dressing

- Mayonnaise: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (best quality full-fat mayonnaise for maximum richness)
- Sour Cream or Plain Greek Yogurt: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (adds a light tang and balances the mayonnaise)
- Dijon Mustard: 1 tablespoon

- Lemon Juice: 1 tablespoon (freshly squeezed)
- Dill Weed: 1 teaspoon dried dill (or 1 tablespoon fresh dill, finely chopped)
- Garlic Powder: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon
- Onion Powder: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon
- Fine Sea Salt: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (adjust to taste)
- Black Pepper: $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (freshly cracked)

For the Salad

- Canned Tuna: 2 cans (5 to 6 oz each), drained well (solid white albacore or chunk light packed in water)
- Sweet Green Peas: $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (frozen peas, thawed and drained thoroughly)
- Celery: 2 medium stalks, diced fine
- Red Onion: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, diced fine
- Cheddar Cheese: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, small-diced or coarsely shredded (sharp yellow cheddar recommended)

- Hard-Boiled Eggs (Optional): 2 large, peeled and chopped

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Prep the Key Ingredients

1. Thaw the Peas: Place $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of frozen sweet green peas into a colander. Rinse them briefly under lukewarm water for 30 seconds until thawed. Drain thoroughly and pat them dry with a paper towel to avoid watering down the salad dressing.
2. Drain the Tuna: Open two cans of tuna and press out as much water as possible using the lid or a fine-mesh strainer. Dry tuna ensures the dressing adheres properly.
3. Chop the Vegetables & Cheese: Dice 2 stalks of celery and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of red onion into small, uniform pieces. If using hard-boiled eggs or block cheddar cheese, chop them into small bite-sized cubes.

2. Whisk the Creamy Dressing

1. In a small mixing bowl, combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream (or Greek yogurt), 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard, and 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice.
2. Add 1 teaspoon dried dill, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon onion powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fine sea salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cracked black pepper.

3. Whisk vigorously until the dressing is completely smooth, emulsified, and uniform in color.

3. Assemble and Toss

1. In a large mixing bowl, flake the drained tuna into medium-sized pieces using a fork. Avoid mashing it completely so the salad retains texture.
2. Add the thawed green peas, finely diced celery, diced red onion, cheddar cheese cubes, and chopped hard-boiled eggs (if using).
3. Pour the prepared creamy dressing over the tuna mixture.
4. Using a soft silicone spatula, gently fold the ingredients together from the bottom up until everything is evenly coated in dressing.

4. Chill and Serve

1. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap or transfer to an airtight container.
2. Place in the refrigerator to chill for at least 30 minutes before serving. Chilling allows the flavors to meld together and firms up the dressing.
3. Give the salad a quick, light toss right before serving. Garnish with a sprinkle of extra dill or cracked black pepper if desired.

Chef's Recipe Notes & Variations

- **Pea Selection:** Frozen sweet green peas work best for this recipe because they retain a firm texture and vibrant color. Canned peas are generally too soft and will turn mushy when tossed with the heavy dressing.
- **Tuna Choice:** Solid white albacore tuna yields larger, meatier chunks that hold up well in a cold salad. Chunk light tuna offers a milder taste and smaller flake size.
- **Low-Carb / Keto Adaptation:** Omit the green peas or reduce them to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup to lower the net carb count, and use full-fat sour cream or extra-heavy mayonnaise in place of yogurt.
- **Storage Instructions:** Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 to 4 days. Freezing is not recommended, as mayonnaise-based dressings separate upon thawing and thawed vegetables lose their crispness.

Serving Suggestions

- **Classic Cold Side:** Serve chilled in a bowl alongside summer picnics, barbecue chicken, or roasted meats.
- **Lettuce Boats:** Scoop generous portions into romaine lettuce leaves, butter lettuce cups, or avocado halves for a low-carb, fresh presentation.
- **Tuna Pea Sandwich:** Pile onto toasted sourdough, whole grain bread, or a warm croissant with crisp lettuce leaves.

- Pasta Salad Mashup: Fold in 2 cups of cooked and cooled elbow macaroni or shell pasta to instantly turn this side dish into a main course tuna pasta salad.

Nutritional Facts

(Estimated nutrition per serving, based on 4 equal servings using water-packed albacore tuna, full-fat mayonnaise, sour cream, and sharp cheddar cheese, without optional hard-boiled eggs)

Nutrient	Amount Per Serving
Calories	375 kcal
Total Fat	27 g
Saturated Fat	7 g
Trans Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	55 mg
Sodium	680 mg
Total Carbohydrates	11 g
Dietary Fiber	3 g
Sugars	4 g
Protein	23 g
Vitamin D	1.8 mcg
Calcium	140 mg
Iron	1.9 mg
Potassium	320 mg