

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Total Time: 50 minutes

Yield: 24-30 shards (2-3 servings)

Intensity Level: Easy (No special skills required, just a bit of patience with the bake)

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Introduction

Craving the crunch of a pizza crust without the carb crash? These Crispy Cottage Cheese Pizza Shards are your new best friend. We take creamy, high-protein cottage cheese and transform it into a thin, golden, and audibly crunchy cracker base. Topped with a punchy

tomato paste, garlic, and a sprinkle of mozzarella, every bite delivers that classic pizza flavor you love. Perfect for dipping, snacking, or serving on a charcuterie board, this low-carb recipe proves that healthy snacking doesn't have to be boring. Say goodbye to soggy snacks and hello to the shatter-crisp shard!

Ingredients

For the Shards:

- 1 cup (240g) full-fat cottage cheese (do not use low-fat; the fat is essential for structure)
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup (50g) finely grated Parmesan cheese (freshly grated is best)
- 1/4 cup (30g) almond flour
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

- Pinch of black pepper

For the Topping:

- 3 tablespoons tomato paste (no added sugar)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional, for heat)
- 1/3 cup (40g) shredded low-moisture mozzarella cheese

For Serving (Optional):

- Fresh basil leaves, torn
- Extra Parmesan, for dusting
- Marinara sauce, for dipping

Equipment

- Food processor or blender
 - Fine-mesh sieve or cheesecloth
 - Mixing bowl
 - Whisk
 - Rubber spatula
 - Baking sheet (large)
 - Parchment paper
 - Rolling pin (optional, but helpful)
 - Pizza cutter or sharp knife
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Instructions

Step 1: Drain the Cottage Cheese (Time: 10 minutes, Intensity: Low)

The most critical step for crispy shards is removing excess moisture. Place the cottage cheese in a fine-mesh sieve lined with cheesecloth or a clean, thin kitchen towel. Set it over a bowl and press gently with a spatula. Let it drain for 10 minutes. This prevents a soggy crust.

Step 2: Preheat and Prep (Time: 5 minutes, Intensity: Low)

While the cheese drains, preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C) . Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Do not grease the parchment—the dough needs to grip it.

Step 3: Create the Dough Base (Time: 5 minutes, Intensity: Medium)

In your food processor, combine the drained cottage cheese, egg, grated Parmesan, almond flour, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, salt, and pepper. Pulse until the mixture is completely smooth and resembles a thick, creamy batter. Scrape down the sides as needed. If you don't have a processor, whisk vigorously by hand until no curds remain—this may take a few extra minutes.

Step 4: Spread the Dough (Time: 7 minutes, Intensity: Medium)

Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking sheet. Using a rubber spatula (or a slightly damp hand), spread the dough into a very thin, even rectangle, about 1/8-inch (3mm) thick. The thinner you spread it, the crispier the shards. Aim for a rectangle roughly 12×9 inches. Work quickly—the dough is sticky and begins to set as it warms.

Step 5: First Bake (Time: 20 minutes, Intensity: Low)

Bake on the middle rack for 20 minutes. The edges should be set and lightly golden. Remove from the oven and let it cool for 5 minutes. Do not skip this cooling step; it allows the crust to firm up before you add the topping, preventing sogginess.

Step 6: Add the Pizza Topping (Time: 3 minutes, Intensity: Low)

In a small bowl, mix the tomato paste, olive oil, dried basil, and red pepper flakes (if using). Spread this mixture evenly over the partially baked crust, leaving a 1/2-inch border around the edges. Sprinkle the shredded mozzarella evenly on top.

Step 7: Second Bake (Time: 10-12 minutes, Intensity: Medium)

Return the sheet to the oven and bake for another 10-12 minutes, until the cheese is bubbly and the edges are deeply golden brown. Watch closely during the last 3 minutes—the thin edges can go from perfect to burnt quickly. The intensity here is medium because you need to monitor the browning.

Step 8: Cool and Shatter (Time: 10 minutes, Intensity: Low)

Remove from the oven and let the pizza cool completely on the baking sheet for at least 10 minutes. This is the most important step for achieving the “shard” texture. As it cools, the crust becomes brittle and crispy. Do not cut while hot—it will tear.

Step 9: Cut and Serve (Time: 3 minutes, Intensity: Low)

Once fully cool, use a pizza cutter or sharp knife to slice the pizza into irregular shards—triangles, rectangles, or rustic jagged pieces. Garnish with fresh basil and a dusting of Parmesan. Serve immediately, or store in an airtight container.

Recipe Notes & Pro Tips

- **The Moisture Rule:** If your cottage cheese is particularly watery, drain it for up to 20 minutes. A dry dough is a crispy dough.
- **Thickness Matters:** Use a ruler for the first bake. If the dough is thicker than 1/8 inch, it will be chewy, not crispy. Spread it as thin as you dare without tearing.
- **Oven Variance:** Ovens run hot. Check your shards at the 8-minute mark of the second bake. If they are browning too fast, lower the temperature to 350°F (175°C).
- **Flavor Variations:** Swap the oregano for Italian seasoning, add a pinch of smoked paprika to the dough, or use a different hard cheese like Asiago.
- **Storage:** These shards are best the day they are made. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days. To re-crisp, place in a 300°F (150°C) oven for 5 minutes. Do not microwave—they will become rubbery.

Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 1/3 of the recipe (approx. 8–10 shards)

Calories: 310

Total Fat: 21g

Saturated Fat: 10g

Cholesterol: 95mg

Sodium: 720mg

Total Carbohydrates: 7g

Dietary Fiber: 1g

Total Sugars: 4g

Protein: 22g