

- Prep Time: 15 minutes
 - Cook Time: 45 minutes
 - Total Time: 1 hour
 - Yield: 8-10 servings
 - Cuisine: American
 - Course: Main Course
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Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 pounds ground beef (80/20 or 85/15 is ideal)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon paprika (sweet or smoked)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 (15-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 (15-ounce) can beef broth

- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1 bay leaf
 - 2 cups (about 8 ounces) dry elbow macaroni
 - 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (optional, for serving)
 - Fresh parsley, chopped (optional, for garnish)
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Instructions

Phase 1: The Aromatics (Time: 5-7 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

1. Sauté the Vegetables: Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven or a heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Add the diced onion and green bell pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until they have softened and the onion is translucent, about 5-7 minutes.
2. Add the Garlic: Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another 60 seconds, until fragrant. Be careful not to burn the garlic.

Phase 2: Browning the Beef (Time: 8-10 minutes | Intensity: Medium-High)

1. **Brown the Beef:** Add the ground beef to the pot. Use a wooden spoon or spatula to break it up into small, even crumbles. Cook until it is fully browned and no longer pink. This should take about 8-10 minutes.
2. **Drain Excess Fat:** Carefully tilt the pot and use a spoon to remove and discard most of the excess fat, leaving about a tablespoon behind for flavor.

Phase 3: Building the Flavor (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

1. **Season the Mixture:** Sprinkle the salt, black pepper, paprika, and dried oregano over the beef mixture. Stir well to coat everything evenly. The paprika is key here—it adds a beautiful color and a subtle, warm depth of flavor.
2. **Deglaze the Pot:** Pour in the Worcestershire sauce and stir, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. These bits are packed with flavor!

Phase 4: The Simmer (Time: 20 minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. **Add the Liquids:** Pour in the tomato sauce, diced tomatoes (with their juices), and beef broth. Add the bay leaf. Stir everything together until well combined.
2. **Simmer:** Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, then immediately reduce the heat to low. Cover the pot and let it simmer for 20 minutes. This allows the flavors to develop and

marry together beautifully. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking.

Phase 5: Cooking the Pasta (Time: 12-15 minutes | Intensity: Low-Medium)

1. Add the Macaroni: After the sauce has simmered, remove the bay leaf. Stir in the dry elbow macaroni. Make sure the pasta is mostly submerged in the liquid.
2. Cook Until Tender: Re-cover the pot and continue to simmer for 12-15 minutes, or until the macaroni is tender (al dente). Stir every few minutes, especially towards the end, to ensure the pasta cooks evenly and doesn't stick to the bottom of the pot. The sauce will thicken significantly as the pasta absorbs the liquid.

Phase 6: Finishing & Serving (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. Final Taste: Taste the goulash and adjust seasoning if necessary. If the mixture seems too thick, you can stir in a splash of beef broth or water to reach your desired consistency.
 2. Serve: Ladle the goulash into bowls. Top each serving with a generous sprinkle of shredded sharp cheddar cheese and a pinch of fresh parsley for a pop of color and freshness.
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Nutrition Information

Disclaimer: Nutritional information is an estimate and will vary based on the specific ingredients used. This calculation includes the optional cheddar cheese.

- Serving Size: 1/8 of recipe
- Calories: 485 kcal
- Total Fat: 24g
- Saturated Fat: 9g
- Cholesterol: 85mg
- Sodium: 980mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 35g
- Dietary Fiber: 4g
- Total Sugars: 8g
- Protein: 29g