Prep Time: 15 minutes | Cook Time: 20 minutes | Total Time: 35 minutes
Yield: 4 servings (8 wraps) | Intensity Level: Easy–Moderate

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Introduction

Tortilla Wraps with Ground Beef are the ultimate weeknight answer to “what’s for dinner?” — a fast, flavorful, family-friendly meal that comes together in about 35 minutes from pantry staples. Savory, seasoned ground beef is browned with onion and garlic, brightened with tomato and a warm spice blend, then piled into soft tortillas with crisp lettuce, juicy

tomatoes, and melty cheese. The whole thing is finished with a cool, creamy lime-cilantro sauce that ties every bite together. It’s a build-your-own affair that pleases picky eaters (everyone dresses their own), scales easily for a crowd, and works equally well as a packed lunch the next day. The beef filling is also incredibly versatile — use it in tacos, burrito bowls, quesadillas, or on nachos later in the week. With a single skillet and a handful of everyday ingredients, you’ve got a satisfying, protein-forward meal that beats takeout on both time and flavor.

Ingredients

For the Beef Filling

- 1 lb (450 g) lean ground beef (85/15 recommended)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, finely diced (about ¾ cup)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder

- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper (optional, for heat)
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 can (8 oz / 225 g) tomato sauce
- ¼ cup (60 ml) low-sodium beef broth or water
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

For the Lime-Cilantro Sauce

- ½ cup (120 g) sour cream or plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp fresh cilantro, finely chopped

- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice (about ½ lime)
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- Pinch of salt

For the Wraps

- 8 small (6–8 inch) flour tortillas, warmed
- 2 cups (140 g) shredded iceberg or romaine lettuce
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup (115 g) shredded cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ cup diced red onion (optional)
- Pickled jalapeños or hot sauce, for serving (optional)

Equipment

- Large skillet

- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Small bowl (for the sauce)
- Chef’s knife and cutting board
- Dry skillet or microwave (for warming tortillas)

Time & Intensity Breakdown

Stage	Time	Intensity	What’s Happening
Prep ingredients	8 min	Low	Dice onion, garlic, tomato; shred lettuce
Make the sauce	3 min	Low	Whisk sour cream, lime, cilantro
Brown the beef	6–7 min	Moderate	Sear beef until browned; drain excess fat
Build the filling	5–6 min	Moderate	Bloom spices; simmer with tomato sauce
Warm tortillas	3 min	Low	Soften tortillas for folding
Assemble & serve	5 min	Low–Moderate	Fill, roll, and plate

Total active time: ~30 minutes | Total passive time: ~5 minutes

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Instructions

Step 1: Prep the Ingredients (8 minutes | Low Intensity)

Dice the onion finely and mince the garlic. Dice the tomatoes and shred the lettuce; keep them in separate bowls. Grate the cheese if not pre-shredded. Measure out your spices into a small dish so they're ready to go — the beef cooks quickly once it starts. Having everything prepped makes the whole process smooth and stress-free.

Step 2: Make the Lime-Cilantro Sauce (3 minutes | Low Intensity)

In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream (or Greek yogurt), mayonnaise, chopped cilantro, lime juice, garlic powder, and a pinch of salt. Taste and adjust — add more lime for brightness or a pinch more salt if needed. Refrigerate until serving; the flavors meld nicely in even 15 minutes.

Step 3: Brown the Beef (6–7 minutes | Moderate Intensity)

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the ground beef and cook for 6–7 minutes, breaking it into small crumbles with a wooden spoon, until no pink remains and some edges are nicely browned. Don't stir constantly — let the beef sit for a minute at a time so it develops a flavorful crust. If there's a lot of excess fat pooling, tilt the pan and spoon most of it off (leave about 1 tablespoon for flavor).

Step 4: Build the Filling (5–6 minutes | Moderate Intensity)

Reduce the heat to medium. Add the diced onion to the beef and cook, stirring, for 2–3 minutes, until softened. Add the minced garlic, tomato paste, cumin, chili powder, smoked paprika, oregano, cayenne (if using), salt, and pepper. Stir constantly for 1 minute — the tomato paste will darken and the spices will bloom in the fat, which is where the flavor really develops. Pour in the tomato sauce, broth, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir to combine and simmer for 3–4 minutes, until the mixture thickens slightly and coats the meat. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Step 5: Warm the Tortillas (3 minutes | Low Intensity)

While the beef simmers, warm the tortillas so they fold without cracking. Heat them in a dry skillet over medium heat for 20–30 seconds per side, or wrap them in a damp paper towel and microwave for 30–45 seconds. Keep them covered in a clean towel so they stay soft and warm.

Step 6: Assemble and Serve (5 minutes | Low–Moderate Intensity)

Lay a warm tortilla on a plate. Spoon about ⅓ cup of the beef filling down the center, then top with lettuce, diced tomato, shredded cheese, and red onion (if using). Drizzle with the lime-cilantro sauce and add pickled jalapeños or hot sauce if you like. Fold the sides in and roll tightly, or serve open-faced and let everyone build their own. Repeat with the remaining tortillas and serve immediately.

Serving Suggestions

Serve with tortilla chips and salsa, a simple black bean salad, Mexican rice, or elote (street corn). Set out extra lime wedges and hot sauce for those who like a kick. These wraps pack well for lunch — wrap tightly in foil or parchment and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Storage & Reheating

- Beef filling: Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days, or freeze for up to 3 months. Reheat gently in a skillet over medium heat with a splash of broth.

- Assembled wraps: Best eaten fresh, but they hold for a few hours in the fridge if wrapped tightly (keep the sauce separate to prevent sogginess).
- Components: Keep the filling, sauce, and toppings stored separately for make-ahead lunches.
- Do not freeze assembled wraps — the lettuce and tomatoes turn watery.

Nutrition Information (Per Serving, 2 Wraps, Based on 4 Servings)

Values are estimates and will vary by tortilla brand, beef leanness, and exact toppings.

Nutrient	Amount per Serving
Calories	~560 kcal
Total Fat	~31 g
— Saturated Fat	~13 g
Cholesterol	~100 mg
Sodium	~890 mg
Total Carbohydrates	~41 g
— Fiber	~5 g
— Sugars	~6 g
Protein	~33 g