

MAKE YOUR OWN CREAM CHEESE *CULTURE FOR HEALTH*

Cream cheese is fantastic spread on crackers and bread, or as a base for dips, cheesecake, or frosting. If you're just getting started making cheese at home, cream cheese is a great option for beginners. Making homemade cream cheese also gives you control over the ingredients in the foods your family eats.

TIPS FOR MAKING CREAM CHEESE AT HOME

- Traditional cream cheese is made from 50% cream and 50% whole milk. You can create richer cream cheese by using all cream. If you're looking to make a lower fat cream cheese, we suggest using all whole milk.
- Be careful **heating your cream or milk**. Heating milk too quickly may cause it not to set or taste unpleasant later.
- If you wish to make larger batches of cream cheese, use one gallon of milk (or a combination of milk and cream), follow **option 1** as directed below or follow **option 2** and use 1/4 teaspoon of aromatic culture, and 4 drops of liquid rennet.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED FOR HOMEMADE CREAM CHEESE

Equipment

- Large stainless steel pot with lid - it is best to avoid aluminum.
- Non-aluminum mixing utensil
- Tight-weave towel or butter muslin
- Colander
- Bowl

Ingredients

Option 1:

- **Milk:** 2 quarts cow milk (do not use ultra-pasteurized or ultra-high-temperature milk), or a combination of milk and cream
- **Culture/Coagulant:** 1 packet cream cheese starter culture. This is a ready-to-use packet that includes both starter culture and rennet. If using this starter, up to 1 gallon of milk can be used

Option 2:

- **Milk:** 2 quarts cow milk (do not use ultra-pasteurized or ultra-high-temperature milk), or a combination of milk and cream
- **Culture:** 1/4 teaspoon mesophilic aromatic culture (e.g., flora danica, mesophilic aromatic type B, MA4001)
- **Rennet:** 2 drops liquid rennet or 1/4 rennet tablet plus water to dissolve the rennet.

HOMEMADE CREAM CHEESE RECIPE

Step One: Culture the Milk

Option 1: Use a Cream Cheese Starter Culture

1. **Heat** the milk to 86°F.
2. **Remove** the milk from the heat and **thoroughly stir** in the packet of cream cheese culture mixture. **Do not stir longer than 15 seconds.**
3. **Cover the pot** and **leave** the mixture to culture for **12 to 18 hours** at approximately **72°F.**
4. **After 12 to 18 hours,** the cheese should look like **yogurt** (solid if tipped but still relatively soft). You may see some whey separating from the cheese. The whey is a mostly clear liquid.

Option 2: Use a Mesophilic Aromatic Culture + Rennet

1. **Heat** the milk to 75°F.
2. **Remove the milk** from the heat and allow the mesophilic culture to **dissolve** on the surface of the milk for approximately **2 to 3 minutes.** Once the culture is dissolved, **thoroughly incorporate** the starter culture into the milk.
3. **Mix** the 2 drops of rennet with 2 tablespoons of water or **dissolve** the rennet tablet in 1/4 cup of water. **Add** the rennet mixture to the milk. **Using up-and-down strokes** rather than a stirring motion, incorporate the rennet into the milk. **Do not over-mix.**
4. **Cover the pot** and **allow** the mixture to culture for **14 to 16 hours** at **70° to 75°F.**
5. **After 14 to 16 hours,** the cheese should look like **yogurt** (solid if tipped but still relatively soft). You may see some whey separating from the cheese. The whey is a mostly clear liquid.

Step Two: Strain the Cheese

Place a piece of butter muslin (doubled) or a tea towel in a colander in a bowl. **Gently spoon** the cultured milk into the butter muslin. **Gather up the corners** of the muslin and **tie knots** to secure.

1. **Hang** the butter muslin filled with the cultured milk over a bowl so the whey can drain. An easy way to do this is to tie the butter muslin around a cupboard handle so the bowl to catch the whey can rest on the counter underneath.
2. Allow the cream cheese to **drain for 6 to 12 hours** to reach the desired consistency.
3. **Knead** salt into the cheese to flavor.
4. **Store** in the refrigerator. Use within a week.