

Easy Pesto

2 cups clean basil leaves (you can use all one variety or mixed varieties, according to your taste)

1/4 - 1/2 cup nuts. Pinenuts are traditional, but I use pecans because they grow here on our farm.

1/2 cup grated hard cheese such as Parmesan or Romano, or a blend.

5-8 cloves of garlic, according to your taste

Approximately 1/2 cup olive or other vegetable oil. This amount can vary depending on how much cheese and nuts you put in.

Food Processor:

Add all ingredients and process until you have a smooth, well-mixed pesto. The consistency should be similar to that of mayonnaise.

Blender

This is a little more work than using a food processor, but makes an equally delicious pesto. Place about a quarter of the basil leaves in the jar adding 1/2 cup oil, the nuts and cheese. Blend (I use the puree setting or high setting.)

You'll need a wooden spoon or rubber spatula to push the mixture down onto the blades fairly often. ---Don't do what I did one time.... and stick a wooden spoon in the jar before the blades stopped turning. The spoon was jerked from my hand, bounced out of the jar, sprayed oil and basil everywhere and broke the spoon inside the jar. I threw the whole mess away and had to start over so I didn't have splinters in the pesto. In other words.... **wait until the blades have stopped turning before sticking the spoon in!!!**

After you have that first mix pretty well blended and the nuts are well ground, just keep adding the basil leaves about a handful at a time until all the leaves are used up. If the mix is too thick, add **a little** oil to thin it down.

It doesn't have to be perfectly smooth. In fact, I like the pesto a little coarse so I can see the leaves, but the nuts should be well ground.

To preserve the pesto, I fill ice cube trays with the mixture and freeze it over night. The next day I remove the pesto cubes and store them in a plastic bag or tub in the freezer. One cube is one serving.