

Meat Sauce for Spaghetti-I rarely have original recipes as I believe there is really nothing new under the sun and I still have so much more to learn from others who have created their own recipes. I don't think this is original with me, but I can't say that I took inspiration from anywhere other than my Italian heritage and my own taste preferences. I do hope you enjoy it!

- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ pound hot Italian sausage (if you prefer mild sausage, go for it. It's your kitchen, after all!)
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2-3 (or 4!) cloves of garlic, minced (please, do yourself a favor, and DO NOT use garlic powder)
- 1 28-oz can of [whole, peeled tomatoes](#), broken up (I use a potato masher, or if I'm feeling adventurous, I just squeeze the tomatoes with my hands!)
- 2 teaspoons dried basil (unless I have fresh, then I add it at the end)
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper, taste

Brown the meat in a large Dutch oven. Add the onion and garlic and allow to cook for about 5 minutes. (Sometimes, at this point, I'll deglaze the pot with about ½ cup of red wine. But not always.) Add the tomatoes, then the spices, cover and let simmer for at least 30 minutes, but you can also leave it simmering for as long as you wish. If you do, check it periodically to make sure there is consistently enough liquid. Add more tomatoes or tomato puree, only a bit at a time, if necessary.

If the canned tomatoes you use have too much liquid in them, you can add some tomato paste to thicken it up, but I try to avoid this because I don't care for such a strong concentration of tomato flavor. I prefer to taste the meat and vegetables equally with the tomatoes. I actually prefer to use a little tomato SAUCE or PUREE (instead of paste), but I rarely would add a full can and hate to throw any food away ... such a conundrum. Typically, however, I can avoid both of these options by using really good whole, peeled tomatoes!