



# Mozzarella Stretching Instructions

(for a 1lb. pack)

## Get ready to stretch!

### Your shipment includes:

- Our handmade, cultured mozzarella curd, shipped on dry ice (please freeze upon arrival).

### What you will need:

- 2.5 Tbsp. Sea Salt or Kosher Salt
- Approximately 1 gallon of 190°F water (using a programmable kettle, or a pot of water on the stove just below boiling - use a digital or meat thermometer for accuracy)
- Large spoon or paddle (metal or wood)
- 1 mixing bowl for stretching
- Colander/strainer over a large bowl for draining & capturing the 'liquid gold'
- Container of cold water for storage of your finished product (and for cooling off your hands!)

## How to Stretch:

1. Thaw the sealed pouch in cold water for 30-60 minutes or until curds are completely thawed.
2. Open the pouch and pour the entire contents into your mixing bowl.
3. Gently break the curds up into acorn-sized pieces.
4. Add the salt and gently toss the curd to ensure salt distribution.
5. Pour the 190° water directly over the curds until they are completely covered (only until just covered - you will use about 1/2 of the water, using the rest in step 8).
6. Stir the curds vigorously for 20-30 seconds - you should start to see a few strings developing between the curds.
7. Pour off 2/3 of that water into the colander over a bowl (return any curds you lose to your original bowl). Note: save the poured-off water! This 'liquid gold' can be refrigerated & used as a simple salt!
8. Add more 190° water to cover the curds again, this time pouring the water along the side of the bowl.
9. Using a spoon, gently push the curds into each other to form a mass. Place the spoon under the mass and lift, allowing the curds to stretch under their own weight.  
NOTE: the water will be extremely hot, so make sure you have the cold water bowl nearby for cooling your hands off as you stretch.
10. Perform this stretch 3-4 times or until 90% of the lumps are gone, and begin forming by hand, folding under (much like you would fold a pair of socks) and pinching off at the bottom to form a smooth ball.
11. Store finished cheese in your container of cool water.



## FAQs

**How soon do I need to use the curd?** The curd will be shipped to you frozen (it's ok if it's slightly thawed upon arrival) and **should be stored in the freezer when it arrives**. It will need to be thawed before using (in a bowl of cold water on the countertop). As this is a naturally fermented product, once thawed, it should be used the same day for best stretching results. (upon thawing, the fermentation process continues and could alter the outcome of your stretching.) It can be stored in the freezer for up to a year.

**How long will the finished mozzarella be good for, and how much will I be able to make?** Fresh mozzarella is best enjoyed the day it's made! You can store it in water for up to 24 hours, where it will be fantastic in all fresh applications like Caprese Salad. After the 24 hours, remove it from the water and wrap tightly in plastic - the cheese will dry out a little, but at that point would be perfect for pizza, grilled cheese, or baked into a pasta dish like lasagna! Each pound of curd yields about a pound of finished cheese.

**What is curd?** They are the solids that remain after the milk is coagulated and the whey is removed. Curd simply means "unfinished cheese." In cheddar, for example, it would mean that the curds have not been pressed or aged. In the case of mozzarella it means that the curds have not yet been stretched.

**What does 'cultured' mean?** This means we make our cheeses in the traditional way, using cultures - or bacteria - to start a natural fermentation process. This is different from the industrial cheesemakers who use vinegar or citric acid to coagulate the milk to make it appear to look like cheese (thereby leaving a high level of lactose in the cheese).

**Are your cheeses pasteurized?** Yes, all of our cheeses are pasteurized at a low temperature to preserve the quality and natural flora of the milk as much as possible. By federal law any cheese aged less than 60 days must be pasteurized.

**Can I split the pack in half and re-freeze it or use it later?** If you only want to stretch half of the curd, that's fine. The rest of the curd may not stretch if you keep it too long, but would still be fine for crumbling onto a pizza or baking into a pasta dish. It can also be very challenging to stretch just a 1/2 lb., as the weight of the full pound helps with a good stretch.

**Can I freeze my finished cheese?** Again, we recommend enjoying your fresh mozzarella within a day of making it, but you can certainly freeze it if needed. At this point it would be best for baking in a lasagna or using on pizza - any melting application vs. eating it fresh.

## Troubleshooting Tips

**The curds are not coming together after I add the hot water - no 'strings' are forming, or the curds are not coming together to stretch.**

The simple answer is that your water is not hot enough - even if you have it set at 190°, it can cool off during the process or if the curd is too cold, it will cool down the water. Pour off as much of what you have in the bowl as possible, and add more 190° water to just cover the curds.

If you are stretching and get a hole or tear in your cheese 'waterfall', this is just a cold spot - return the cheese to the bowl of water to warm it up & try again.