



Basic Pressed-cheese Steps



1. Pour 2 gallons milk into a clean pot



2. Heat milk by direct heat; CaCl₂ might be added at this step.

3. Add lipase (diluted in water for 20 minutes) if needed, stir in slowly (don't foam)
4. Add rennet (diluted in water), mix in with slow up-and-down motion, then stop motion in milk. Do not move milk after this step until cutting.
5. Hold at temp for time specified



6. Check for clean break of curds with clean finger



7. Cut curds: first cut across & straight down



8. Then turn ¼ turn and cut at 45° angle across previous cuts. Continue turning ¼ turn until pot returns to original position.
9. Hold cut curds for time specified off of heat.



10. Cook the curds: often done with indirect heat in a sink or water bath. Curds are stirred slowly so that they are not broken up, but they will shrink as they heat and give off whey. Time and temperature varies with type of cheese, but is key in developing final taste and texture.



11. Drain the curds. After cooking, curds are allowed to rest so they will settle to the bottom of the pot. Whey is poured off and curds are drained in a colander or strainer; **SAVE THE WHEY to make ricotta!**



Basic Pressed-cheese Steps (page 2)



12. Curds are carefully broken up into smaller pieces without squeezing, known as "milling." The curds are then salted, and the salt is mixed in carefully with your hands.



13. Pressing the curds: curds are packed into a mold lined with coarse cheesecloth. The follower is placed on top of the curds, and weight is applied to the top of the follower. Different amounts of weight are applied for different amounts of time, depending on the type of cheese; pressed curds might be unwrapped and flipped before being rewrapped and pressed more with more weight.



14. Pressed cheese is removed from cheesecloth and can be cut into quarters to be air dried on a cheese mat. Cheese is turned several times a day for even drying. Mold might develop on the surface of the cheese while drying; it can be wiped off with a piece of cheesecloth dipped in vinegar.



15. After cheese is air-dried, most types are either waxed or vacuum sealed for aging. Cheese wax is melted in a double boiler (NEVER microwave, it will explode!) and the cheese wedges are dipped in the wax until completely covered. Alternatively, cheese wedges can be sealed in plastic pouches with a vacuum sealer. Cheese can then be aged as necessary.

