PASTA, HOMEMADE
By Dennis W. Viau; this is a standard recipe.

Homemade pasta is foodier. It is made with whole eggs, so you get more protein. The pasta therefore satisfies hunger better than the dry stuff you buy in the store, and you are less likely to feel hungry afterward. Store-bought pasta is basically flour. One half cup of flour contains about 6 grams of protein. One egg has 7 grams of protein. So, by making your own pasta you are more than doubling the protein.

The following is a fairly standard recipe. The only variations are to add a tablespoon of water to stretch the dough a little, or to add a little olive oil, which will give you a slightly smoother dough. I’ve made green pasta by working with spinach and orange pasta with sundried tomatoes.

For standard pasta dough I use half all-purpose flour and half pasta flour (durum wheat semolina). If your local supermarket doesn’t sell pasta flour you can use regular flour. The pasta flour gives the finished pasta more of an al dente texture.

Ingredients (for each 1 to 2 servings):
1 egg¹ (see notes at end)
¼ teaspoon salt²
¼ cup (40g) pasta flour (durum wheat semolina)
¼ cup (30g) all-purpose flour
(or ½ cup (60g) all-purpose flour if pasta flour is unavailable)
Additional flour as needed to stiffen the dough enough for kneading

Directions:
Beat the egg(s) with the salt in a bowl³ until well blended. Add the flour(s) a little at a time, mixing with a fork or wooden spoon until the mixture becomes dry enough to knead. It should be fairly stiff, but still moist.

Note: It is better to start with too little flour because it is easy to add more as needed. If the dough is too dry, adding moisture is possible, but difficult.

Knead the dough for a few minutes, adding more flour as needed, until smooth. It should not stick to your hands. Wrap in plastic and let rest for about an hour. If you wish to store it longer, place it in the refrigerator. Letting the dough rest will allow the flour to absorb moisture and yield a smoother dough that has more elasticity. Do not refrigerate the dough more than 24 hours, unless vacuum sealed, as it will change color and appear less appetizing.

Use a pasta machine or roller to shape the dough. There are dozens of different shapes and cuts for rolled pasta. (See the photographs below for some examples.)

Unlike dry pasta, which requires cooking for 8 to 12 minutes or longer, fresh pasta cooks in 1 to 2 minutes. It is already hydrated (contains moisture); you only need to cook the egg. One minute is enough for an al dente (chewy) pasta. Cook it a minute longer if you like your pasta soft and tender.

Serve with your favorite sauce or other toppings.

The Step By Step guide begins on the following page.
There isn’t much that goes into pasta dough: Eggs, salt, and flour. I use half pasta flour (the semolina in the picture) and half all-purpose flour. You can use 100% all-purpose flour (I did so for years). The coarser, harder semolina adds body for a more *al dente* texture.

Although the traditional method of making the dough says to put the flour on the counter, make a well in the center, then add the eggs, I like to mix everything in a bowl. It works for me.
After combining all the ingredients you’ll have a fairly stiff dough. Knead it until smooth, by using a smearing action. With both hands push down on the dough, moving your hands away from you, smearing the dough into the counter. If it sticks to the counter dust it with a little flour.

After kneading for a few minutes the dough will be smooth. Wrap in plastic and allow to rest for about an hour. Store in the refrigerator if you plan to use it later.

Use a vacuum-sealer if you plan to store the pasta longer than a day or two. To eliminate as much air as possible, flatten the pasta, squeezing it around the edges to shape the dough like a disc, and seal in the vacuum pouch (see picture in Notes at end). This will eliminate the oxygen that turns the yolk a dark color, which gives the pasta dough a sickly gray/green tinge that is unappetizing. The vacuum pouches freeze well.
My pasta machine has a motor I bought separately. You don't need one, but it makes it possible to use both hands to control the dough as you feed it into the machine. With a motor you don't need to clamp the machine to a surface. If your machine requires hand-cranking, you can still easily feed the dough into the machine with one hand as you use the other to turn the crank. Better yet, get a friend or family member to turn the crank for you.

Start by flattening the dough with your hands, shaping it into a longish slab. Dust it with flour to prevent it from sticking to the rollers in the machine.
Set the machine's rollers to their widest opening (#1 on my machine) and feed the dough through the rollers. As you continue to work you’ll fold the dough and feed it through again several times.

Fold the dough in half and feed it through the machine again. Repeated passes through the machine will knead the dough and make the texture smoother.
When the dough becomes too wide to fit into the machine, fold the sides in, bringing them together, and feed it through the machine. Then you can double it in half again. Ten to twelve passes should be enough.
After several passes you are ready to adjust the rollers closer and closer together to roll the pasta thinner and thinner to the thickness you need. On my machine #4 is the setting I like for cutting spaghetti. I use #5 for most other flat noodle shapes. #6 is fine for cutting pappardella noodles. #7 is too thin to be used for anything. Change the dial to the next setting, roll the dough, and then adjust the dial up one more notch and roll again. As you roll the pasta thinner, it gets longer with each pass. The dough on the left was rolled at #1. On the right it was at #5. As it gets too long to manage you can cut it into smaller pieces.
My machine has small cutters for making a thin noodle that resembles spaghetti. I also have a separate spaghetti attachment that I can put on the machine. It makes round spaghetti strands.

The wider cutters make noodles. Long noodles, such as those above, are called fettuccine. You can cut the noodles shorter to make standard egg noodles for soup.
Cut into long sheets (I use a fluted pastry cutter) for lasagna. Cut into squares and roll around stuffing to make cannelloni (sometimes canneloni). Roll around a wooden dowel (seal the overlap with a little water) and dry the pasta for an hour or two to make manicotti shells. (Manicotti and cannelloni are often confused. Cannelloni is a square sheet of pasta that is wrapped around a filling. Manicotti is a pre-shaped tube of pasta (often machine-extruded through a die) that is cooked and then filled with stuffing.) My manicotti shells break up if left to dry overnight. Use them within an hour or two.

To help the pasta release from the wooden dowel, roll it back and forth applying light downward pressure. This will roll the pasta into a larger tube. (You might need to repeat this procedure periodically as the pasta shrinks back against the dowel.) Allow the pasta to dry on the dowel for an hour or two until it is stiff enough to hold its shape. When boiled in water it will expand. If it breaks when filled use a wider setting, #4, on the pasta machine to make a thicker pasta. I cut about a dozen dowels, each about 5 inches long, from a one-inch wide wooden dowel bought in a lumber store.
Cut the dough into small 1-inch squares and roll corner-to-corner, sealing the final corner with a little water, to make garganelli. I use a gnocchi board for ridges (garganelli rigate). These pasta shapes take a long time to make because you form them one at a time.

You can simply cut the sheet into strips like this for a more rustic pasta. This would be similar to egg noodles, but the width would vary.

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Cut into long strips for pappardelle. This pasta is typically served with game meat, such as rabbit, and a hearty sauce. I use it with thin slices of lamb cooked in garlic, olive oil and rosemary. For the sauce I add a little heavy cream. For these noodles I roll the dough thinner, to the #6 setting on my machine.

Cook for 2 to 3 minutes and serve with your favorite sauce. This ugly gallimaufry of shapes is a combination of all the shapes in the previous pictures.
Notes

1. The size of the egg determines how much flour you will need. It seems obvious, but larger eggs will absorb more flour.

2. Salt is added because this is fresh pasta, as opposed to the dry pasta you buy in the store. When you cook dry pasta you put salt in the water. The pasta will absorb this salted water as it cooks and the salt enhances the pasta's flavor. (It doesn't cook really, it just hydrates—going from dry back to moist again, where it began.) When cooking fresh pasta (which really cooks, because you need to cook the egg in it), very little water will be absorbed; therefore, adding salt to the water would be pointless. Instead, salt is added to the pasta dough.

3. Traditional methods call for putting the flour on the counter, making a depression in the middle of it, into which you pour the eggs. You then combine this with your fingers. I think it is more difficult to control the amount of flour used and you run the risk of ending up with a dough that is too dry. Therefore, I prefer to start with eggs in a bowl and add the flour gradually.

4. If you have a vacuum sealing device you can seal the dough in air-tight plastic and store it for several days (or freeze). It will not change color. (The yolk in the dough oxidizes when exposed to air, even if wrapped in plastic wrap, and this oxidation darkens the color. Vacuum sealing the dough in plastic protects it from oxygen, preserving the color.) The dough can be stored for months in the freezer. The two samples of dough shown below were taken from the same batch. One was wrapped in plastic wrap, the other was vacuum sealed in a pouch. Both were stored on the same shelf in the refrigerator. After 72 hours dough the dough on the right had darkened to an unappetizing color. The vacuum sealed dough maintained its creamy color.