



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Ham and Cheese Grits Breakfast Bake

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Tips and Extras

- 🧂 **Season those grits.** Don't trust the chicken stock to do all the work—taste before adding the eggs and give it a good pinch of salt if it's feelin' bland. Boring grits are a sin in at least 14 Southern states.
- 🧀 **Shred your own cheese.** Bagged cheese is coated in anti-clumping powder, which sounds like a blessing but melts like disappointment. Take the extra two minutes and grate it yourself—it's worth it.
- 🕒 **Make it ahead.** Assemble the whole thing the night before, cover it, and stick it in the fridge. Next morning? Just bake it and act like you woke up early on purpose.
- 🔥 **Let it rest.** Give it 5–10 minutes to cool after baking so it sets up and doesn't come out looking like a cheese avalanche. Unless you're into that, in which case—pour yourself a mimosa and go for it.
- 🥓 **Toss in extras if you're feelin' wild.** Crispy bacon, sautéed mushrooms, jalapeños, or leftover veggies from last night's "I should eat better" moment? This casserole is your blank canvas. Go full Jackson Cheddar Pollock.
- 🥄 **Use a whisk for smoother grits.** Clumps are for mascara, not breakfast. Whisk those grits like you're trying to erase your poor life choices from last weekend.
- 🧊 **Freeze it in muffin tins.** For single-serve portions that make you look like you have your life together—even if you're eating it cold in your robe while hiding from your in-laws.
- 🧈 **Butter that casserole dish.** Like, really butter it. Pretend Paula Deen is judging your commitment. It keeps the edges golden and helps your casserole slide out like it owns the place. Better yet? Use bacon grease!

Storage

Fridge

Let the casserole cool down—no one likes a sweaty storage container. Cover it tightly or pop it in an airtight container, then stash it in the fridge for up to 4 days.

Freeze

Want to make it ahead or save some for later? Wrap individual portions like little Southern love notes in plastic wrap and foil, then freeze for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the fridge and reheat like the domestic legend you are.

Reheat

Reheat in the microwave or oven until it's hot and melty again. Bonus points if you top it with more cheese because you're not a quitter.

Variations

- 🌶️ **Add a kick.** Stir in diced jalapeños, a pinch of cayenne, or a splash of hot sauce if your taste buds like to live on the wild side. Great for impressing people who say “I like it spicy” but cry over medium salsa.
- 🥓 **Swap the ham for bacon or sausage.** Or go rogue and use all three. It's your kitchen. You're the boss. The cholesterol committee doesn't get a vote today.
- 🧀 **Try a different cheese blend.** No smoked gouda? Use pepper jack, colby, fontina, or whatever's in the cheese drawer lookin' tragic and half-used. Just don't use that weird American cheese that comes in plastic sleeves—we're Southern, not savage.
- 🥬 **Sneak in some greens.** Add spinach, chopped kale, or even sautéed collards if you wanna make it feel a tiny bit virtuous. Then cancel it out with more cheese. Balance, baby.
- 🍷 **Turn it into a brunch board centerpiece.** Slice into squares, stack on mini waffles, and drizzle with hot honey or maple syrup. Suddenly you're the Pinterest mom we all pretend to be.

FAQs

Can I use regular grits instead of quick grits?

You can, but you'll need to cook 'em longer. Like... a lot longer.

What if I don't like smoked gouda?

Well, that's between you and your taste buds. Swap it for something melty and flavorful—fontina, Monterey Jack, or pepper jack if you're feelin' spicy. Just promise me you won't reach for Velveeta unless it's a dare.

Can I make this ahead of time?

Absolutely. Assemble it the night before, stick it in the fridge, and bake it fresh in the morning. That way you can sleep in and still look like a Southern kitchen wizard.

My casserole came out watery. What happened?

Somebody didn't let their grits thicken properly before adding the rest. It's a casserole, not soup. Cook those grits until they're thicker than family gossip before movin' on.

My cheese didn't melt right. Why?!

Store-bought shredded cheese has anti-melty nonsense in it (aka cellulose). Shred your own and thank me later. Or keep using the bagged stuff and pretend you didn't read this.

Can I leave out the green onions?

Yes, but the casserole will weep softly in the fridge. Just sayin'.