

## Coleslaw for BBQ

1 ½ cups cabbage, shredded to about 1/3 inch wide  
½ cup carrot, shredded on a box grater  
A few tablespoons yellow or red onion, sliced very thin  
½ cup mayonnaise, preferably Duke's  
1 ½ tsp white or apple cider vinegar  
Black pepper  
Cayenne  
Garlic powder



I hate coleslaw. It's always soggy when it should be crispy. It's cloying when it should be tart. It makes me gag and urgently rethink my appreciation for cabbage. How could something that has so many tasty things in it be so truly bad? Fortunately, I've learned some things since my many, many bad coleslaw experiences. Now, I always make slaw when I barbecue something. Usually, whatever meat I smoke is salty, fatty, maybe a bit spicy, tender, and deeply seasoned. You need something tart and crisp and cool to counter all the delicious smoky melting fat. This coleslaw does the trick quite nicely.

A few notes on this recipe. Mostly, it's a pretty standard coleslaw. It's slaw. There aren't really any tricks to it. But there are a few things I do that I think improve it a lot. One, serve it the second it's mixed up. No chilling, no waiting, nothing. This makes it stay crisp when it hits the table. You can mix the dressing in advance if you'd like, but once the vegetables go in, take it to the table. This is imperative. Two, this isn't a great recipe for red cabbage. It tends to bleed and turn everything pink, even in the limited time the cabbage stays in the dressing before getting eaten. There are delicious purple cabbage slaw recipes out there. We'll get there, I promise. It will still taste delicious, so by all means use it if you're up for the color. Three, Duke's is important. As a Yankee transplant, I did not understand what makes Duke's so special. Turns out, it doesn't have any sugar. This is perfect for coleslaw in my opinion. Since most of my barbecue gets served with a sauce that has some sugar in it, I don't like a sweet coleslaw. If sweet is your thing, try honey instead of the usual white sugar. Sounds weird but is delicious. For me, the carrots provide enough sweetness. Four, no added salt. Again, the meat it goes with is often highly salted, so you don't want a competing salt lick on the table. Adjust the salt to your liking. This is a tart coleslaw. You can skip the vinegar if you want it less pucker-y, but you might have to add an equivalent amount of water to get the dressing the right consistency.

Mix all the veggies in a bowl. Put the mayonnaise, vinegar, and pinches of black pepper, cayenne, and garlic powder in another bowl. Mix the dressing. It should be the consistency of yogurt (not Greek, the regular, more runny kind). Taste and adjust for seasoning. Add whatever amount of dressing to your veggies you'd like. I like my coleslaw dressed, but not dripping. Immediately rush to the table and devour. In a pinch, I once used the white parts of green onions instead of yellow or red onions. This was divine.