

Ham and Cheese Chowder

1 cup onion, finely chopped (I use less onion)
1 /8 teaspoon pepper
1 ½ cups chopped, cooked ham
½ cup croutons or chopped fresh parsley (optional)
2 medium potatoes, pared, diced in ½ inch cubes
3 tablespoons butter
3 cups milk
1 ½ cups grated cheddar cheese

Simmer potatoes in ½ cup boiling water until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain, reserving liquid. Melt butter in large saucepan; add onion and cook gently for 5–7 minutes or until tender, not browned. Blend in flour and cook, stirring 2 minutes. Add pepper. Add enough water to reserved potato liquid to make 1 cup. Add water and milk to onion mixture. Bring to a boil stirring constantly; reduce heat and simmer. Add cooked potatoes, chopped ham and grated cheese. Stir until cheese melts, about 5 minutes. Serve in deep soup bowls and garnish with croutons or parsley.