

Potatoes



Potatoes are a nutrient-rich, low-calorie root vegetable. They are even more nutritious when eaten with their skin. Use a variety of cooking methods to keep this healthy veggie interesting.

Getting Started

Buy potatoes that feel firm and do not have many “eyes” (small brown or black spots that sometimes grow sprouts) or a green tinge. When choosing potatoes, know that each type works well with certain cooking methods.

- **White potatoes** have a thin skin and hold their shape when cooked. Try them boiled, mashed, grilled, or stewed.
- **Yellow potatoes** have a golden, creamy flesh. They’re considered an “all-purpose” potato. Try them mashed, roasted, boiled, baked, or grilled.
- **Red potatoes** have a reddish skin and white flesh. They are firm and hold their shape when cooked. Try them roasted or boiled.
- **Russet potatoes** are starchy and are brown in color. They are light and fluffy when cooked. Try them baked or boiled.

Store potatoes in a paper bag at room temperature. Do not keep them in the refrigerator. Wash potatoes well before cooking. Remove brown or black spots or small growths with a small knife.

Equipment

- Cutting board
- Paring knife
- Fork
- Large pot with lid (for boiling potatoes)
- Colander (for boiling potatoes)
- Baking sheet (for baking or roasting potatoes)
- Large bowl (for roasting potatoes)
- Parchment paper or aluminum foil (for roasting potatoes)

How to Boil Potatoes

1. Add cold water to a large pot until it is about $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
2. Wash potatoes. If they are different sizes, cut them into equal-size chunks so they will cook evenly.
3. Add potatoes to the pot. Bring the water to a boil over high heat.
4. Turn the heat to low and simmer for 20 minutes or until a fork easily slides into the potatoes.
5. Drain the potatoes in a colander. Serve the potatoes or add them to your favorite recipe. One medium potato (or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for mashed potatoes) is 1 serving.

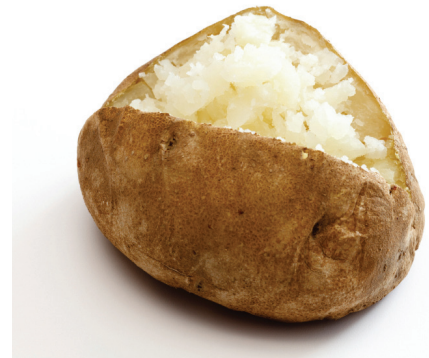
How to Bake Potatoes

1. Preheat the oven to 350 °F.
2. Poke holes on all sides of each potato with a fork.
3. Place the potatoes on a baking sheet lightly coated with nonstick cooking spray.
4. Bake the potatoes for 60 minutes or until a knife or fork easily slides into the potatoes.

If you don't have time to bake potatoes in the oven, use the microwave. You can "bake" a 7- to 8-ounce potato in the microwave in about 7 minutes or 2 potatoes in about 11 minutes. (Be sure to use a microwave-safe dish, not a metal baking sheet.)

How to Roast Potatoes

1. Preheat the oven to 375 °F.
2. Cut $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds potatoes into halves or quarters, depending on their size.
3. Combine the cut potatoes, 1 tablespoon olive oil, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon black pepper, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. For more flavor, add 1–2 cloves peeled and crushed garlic and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil. Place the potatoes on the baking sheet in a single layer.



5. Bake for 30–40 minutes or until the potatoes are golden brown and tender.
6. Serve plain or topped with turkey or vegetarian chili; salsa; fat-free plain Greek yogurt; fat-free cottage cheese; and/or chopped scallions.

Recipe Ideas

- **Garlic Mashed Potatoes:** Place 4 large boiled russet potatoes in a large bowl. Add finely minced garlic to taste. (Keep in mind—a little garlic goes a long way!) Mash the potatoes with an electric mixer or a potato masher. Stir in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup hot low-fat milk for a creamier texture.
- **Baked Potato Wedges:** Preheat oven to 375°F. Cut 4 large russet or red potatoes into small wedges and bake them for 30–40 minutes. For extra flavor, sprinkle the wedges with 4 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese after they are baked.

