

Storing Potatoes

Keep potatoes where it's cool, dark and well-ventilated. The ideal temperature is 45 to 50 degrees. Above 50 degrees will cause sprouting and fast decay. Below 40 degrees will cause starches to convert to sugar, resulting in a "sweet" taste and the potatoes turning dark when fried. Too much light will turn them green and tasting bitter. Keep dry; average storage life is 2 to 3 months.



Freezing Potatoes

Freezing is one of the easiest and most convenient methods of preserving foods for later use. Cut potatoes into 1/4 or 1/2 inch cubes. Blanch 5 minutes, cool, pack, and freeze. Blanching is the process of immersing food in boiling water for the short period time suggested. These times vary with the type and texture of the vegetable and the thickness of the pieces. After blanching cool quickly in ice water, drain vegetables, pat dry with paper towel, and freeze.



Drying Potatoes

Drying is the oldest method to preserve food. It can be done in the oven at 130° F to 150° F, in a dehydrator or in the sun if covered with netting to protect against bugs. Cut into shoestring strips 3/16 inch in cross sections or slice about 1/4 inch thick. Rinse in cold water. Water blanch (5 to 6 minutes) or steam blanch (6 to 8 minutes) and rinse well. (Blanching is explained in the freezing section.) Potatoes are crisp in about 8 to 12 hours.



Canning Potatoes

Canning vegetables must be done with care. All foods harbor microorganisms; these decrease food quality and may form toxins or poisons under certain conditions. To preserve food for long-term storage, conditions must be made unfavorable for the growth of microorganisms.

Food acidity determines which canning method is needed. For canning vegetables a pressure canner is needed. Pressure canners attain a temperature of 240° F to 250° F in order to destroy harmful effects of bacteria.



For further information on proper canning practices and processing times for vegetables refer to the National Center for Home Food Preservation at:
www.uga.edu/nchfp

**For more information contact your local
University of Idaho Extension Office
or visit www.uidaho.edu/extension
www.uidaho.edu/extension/twinfalls**

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The Versatile Potato

Potatoes are inexpensive, tasty and filling, making them a budget dinner favorite. They are also an excellent source of vitamin C and are the top source per serving of potassium compared to any other fruit or vegetable.



This brochure offers useful facts on potatoes. Inside you will find a recipe, 10 cooking methods, storage, preparation, freezing, drying instructions and handy tips to help at home.



How to Make Use of Potatoes

Salsa Baked Potato with Broccoli

Prep Time 10 minutes Cook Time 6 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 medium potato
- 1/4 cup salsa
- 1/4 cup shredded low-fat Cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons light sour cream
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup grated carrots
- 1 cup steamed small broccoli florets

Directions

1. Bake or Microwave potato
2. Cut a long slit in the top of the potato and press the ends in toward the center. With a fork, mash the potato pulp slightly.
3. Add the salsa, cheese, sour cream, and pepper to taste, and mash to mix. Mix in the carrots.
4. Spoon the broccoli into the potato and serve.

Estimated Nutritional Analysis per Serving:

229 calories, 6 g fat, 16 mg cholesterol, 504 mg sodium, 21 g protein, 33 g carbohydrates, 10 g dietary fiber

Courtesy of the: Idaho Potato Commission



10 Healthy Ways to Use Potatoes

Bake - Preheat oven to 425° F and pierce in several places. Place potato on oven rack or baking sheet; bake 45 to 55 minutes or until tender.

Boil - Place diced or whole potatoes in boiling water and cook until tender.

Grill - Rub oil over potato; sprinkle with salt. Preheat the grill on high. Place potatoes directly on the grill, turn heat off and close lid. Turn over halfway through cooking (usually about half an hour).

Foil Wrap - Poke holes and wrap in heavy duty aluminum foil. Cook in oven at 425° F for 45 minutes, or over a camp fire or on a grill.

Mash - Chop potatoes into small even pieces, place in water and turn stove on high. Cook until tender and drain the water. Add 1/2 cup milk and 1/4 cup butter (optional). About 3 large potatoes should make 2 cups mashed potatoes.

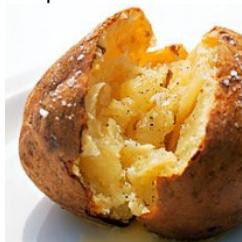
Microwave - Pierce medium potato several times. Place in microwave on paper towel; microwave on high 3.5 to 4.5 minutes, turning potato over once. Remove from oven; let stand 5 minutes.

Roast - Preheat oven to 400° F, chop into 1/2 inch cubes, place in shallow pan and drizzle with oil and salt. Cook 30 minutes and flip; cook 30 more minutes.

Scallop - Slice potatoes thinly and add to cheese sauce in casserole dish, bake at 350° F for 45 minutes.

Soup - Dice up potatoes and add them to any cream soup for added thickness and texture.

Steam - Place potatoes above boiling water in colander. Cover partially and allow the potatoes to cook for approximately 20 minutes.



General Preparation Instructions

1. Wash and scrub potatoes well under clean water.
2. Leave skin on for added nutrients, but cut off any bruises and eyes.
3. If there is any green on your potato, peel away the green sections.



Types of Potatoes & What They're Good For

(Source: 101 Things to Do with a Potato

By Stephanie Ashcraft)

Russet: Great for baking as the results are light and fluffy; also best used for mashed, hash browns and French fries.



Red or Bliss: This is a waxy potato that's best to use for salads, oven roast and soups (other varieties tend to get mushy).



Yellow-Fleshed: Has a nice creamy-texture that is best used in gratins.



New or Baby: New potatoes are perfect for boiling, roasting or steaming.



Instant: Suitable for casseroles, crusts and meat pies or a quick-fix mashed potato.

