



Potatoes

A plant tuber. Potato varieties differ in shape, color, size, flavor and starch content. Their pale or yellowish flesh is covered with a skin that may be red, brown, yellow, green or purple-blue. Mostly round, long or smooth, potato tubers are scattered with small "eyes" from which the buds emerge.

Buying

Choose: firm, intact potatoes, with no sprouts or green parts. Paper bags are preferable to plastic bags, which must be perforated to allow moisture to escape and prevent the potatoes from rotting. Potatoes are sometimes sold prewashed; these are more expensive.

Serving Ideas

Potatoes are eaten cooked, most popularly as French fries, mashed potatoes, roasted or baked. It accompanies meat, poultry and fish. Its flavor can be enhanced with cheese, onion and fresh or dried herbs and spices. Potatoes work well in soups, stews and omelettes.

Cooking

Boiled or steamed: whole with their skin in a very small amount of salted boiling water; cover the pot. Whole potatoes take 20-30 min to cook in boiling water and 30-45 min to steam. Potatoes cut into pieces will cook in 10-15 min in water or over steam. The cooking liquid can be used in soups or sauces.

For fluffy mashed potatoes, boil, then dry the potatoes. Use a potato masher or mill for best results.

Baked: prick potatoes with a fork to allow the steam to escape; wrap in aluminum foil to cook more slowly. Unwrapped potatoes will be drier. A medium-sized potato will cook in 40-50 min at 425F.

Nutritional Information

Per 3.5 oz/100g	raw
Water	79.4%
Protein	2.1g
Fat	0.1g
Carbohydrates	18g
Fiber	1.5g
Calories	79

Preparing

Discard any potato that is more than 50% green, as it will be bitter. Brush potato well if it is to be cooked in its skin, remove eyes and any trace of green. New potatoes do not need to be peeled; cook them as is or brush them. To avoid the flesh blackening, cook potato as soon as it is cut or place in cold water until using.

Excellent Source: potassium.

Contains: copper, niacin, magnesium, folic acid, iron and pantothenic acid.

Properties: raw potato juice is said to be antispasmodic, diuretic, antiscorbutic and cicatrizing.

Storing

At room temperature: 9 months, at a temperature no higher than 40F. Potatoes can also be kept about 2 months in a dark, dry, cool and ventilated place at a temperature of 45F.

In the fridge: new potatoes, cooked potatoes or very old potatoes, 1 week.