

# *How to Cook a Fresh Pumpkin*

By Donalyn Ketchum



*Preparing a fresh pumpkin might be easier than you think - follow these easy steps for success.*

*PREP TIME 10 mins COOK TIME 1 hr TOTAL TIME 1 hr 10 mins*

## *EQUIPMENT USED*

- *Baking Sheet* *Parchment Paper* *Wire Mesh Strainer*
- *Immersion Blender* *Stainless Steel Food Mill*
- *Chef's Knife*

## *INGREDIENTS*

*Fresh pie or sugar pumpkins*

## *INSTRUCTIONS*

*Line a heavy baking sheet with parchment paper and set the oven at 400°. You can do as many pumpkins at a time as your oven will hold, and you have baking sheets for, but the photos just show a single pumpkin]*

- 1. Knock off the stem, and cut the pumpkins in half, from top to bottom. Use a large sharp chef's knife for this - it will be much easier.*
- 2. Scoop out all of the seeds, and pull out whatever stringy membranes you can - no need to be super careful about it, but you do want all of the seeds. Put the seeds in a bowl of cold water right away, if you are going to save them, because it will make it a lot easier to get them clean.*
- 3. Lay the pumpkin halves, cut side down on the baking sheet. Parchment paper is by far the best way to keep them from sticking, but if you don't have any, oil the baking sheets.*

4. Roast the pumpkins for 45 minutes to an hour, until a sharp knife meets no resistance at all when poked into the side. [once you get past the skin of course]
5. Flip the pumpkin halves cut side up to cool for awhile, until you can comfortably handle them.
6. Scoop out all of the flesh, into a bowl big enough to hold it all.
7. Puree the pumpkin with a food processor, a food mill or immersion blender - you want it very smooth and uniform.
8. Place a mesh strainer [a colander will not work, unless it is a fine metal mesh one] over a bowl, and put all of the puree in there to drain. You can weigh it down by placing plastic wrap over the puree, with a plate on top of that, and then some kind of heavy things on top of the plate - cans of beans or some such.
9. Allow to drain for 1 to 2 hours, until no liquid is still dripping out.
10. The pumpkin can be used right away or you can store the it in the refrigerator for 2 or 3 days, or freeze it to use later on in the year.

### **NOTES**

If you do multiple pumpkins at one time, you can have enough pumpkin puree ready in just a few hours to last all winter.