

Pumpkin Basics

Pumpkin Information

- The deep orange color of pumpkin flesh is a sure sign that pumpkin is a good source of vitamin A.
- A one-half cup serving of cooked pumpkin contains more than 100 percent of the required vitamin A and 26 calories. Pumpkin seeds are high in protein and fat.
- For pie filling and other cooking needs, select sugar pumpkins — a smaller, sweeter variety with close-grained flesh.

Pumpkin Pure for Pies or Bread

Boiled: Cut washed, peeled 2- to 4- pound pumpkin into 2-inch chunks; cook in boiling water until tender.

Baked: Wash the outside and cut crosswise. Clean out the seeds and pulp and put flesh-side down in a baking pan with a bit of water. Bake at 350 °F for 1½ hours or until flesh is tender.

Plain Pumpkin Pie for Eating

Cut off the top of a washed 2½- to 3-pound sugar pumpkin, saving the lid and stem for a handle. Scrape out the seeds and pulp, wipe out the inside, then brush with melted butter and sugar or salt. Replace the lid and bake in 350 °F oven for 35 minutes. Coat the inside again with butter, sugar or salt and bake another 10 to 15 minutes or until fork-tender. Slice into wedges to serve.

Freezing Pumpkin

Select full-colored mature pumpkin with fine texture. Wash, cut into cooking-size sections and remove seeds. Cook until soft in boiling water, in

steam, in a pressure cooker or in an oven. Remove pulp from rind and mash. To cool, place pan containing pumpkin in cold water and stir occasionally. Package, leaving ½-inch headspace. Freeze.

Pumpkin Seeds

To Dry: Carefully wash pumpkin seeds to remove the clinging fibrous pumpkin tissue. Seeds can be dried until crisp in the sun, in a dehydrator at 115 to 120 °F for 1 to 2 hours, or in an oven on warm for 3 to 4 hours. Stir frequently to avoid scorching.

To Roast: Toss dried pumpkin seeds with oil (1 teaspoon per cup of seeds). Salt or season to taste. Roast in a preheated oven at 250 °F for 10 to 15 minutes.

Pumpkin Pie or Custard

Preheat oven to 375 °F. Blend together a 13 oz. can of evaporated skim milk, 2 eggs, a 16 oz. can pumpkin, ¾ cups sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon cloves, ½ teaspoon ginger and ½ teaspoon salt. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 375 °F for about 1 hour. Pie is done when a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. To cut the fat, omit the pie crust and bake in 8 individual custard dishes for 40 minutes at 375 °F.

For more information, request [HGIC 3281, Pumpkin & Winter Squash](#), or [HGIC 3086, Drying Herbs, Seeds & Nuts](#).

Sources:

Reynolds, Susan and Paulette Williams. *So Easy to Preserve*, Bulletin 989. Revised 1999 by Elizabeth Andress and Judy Harrison. Cooperative Extension Service, Univ. of Georgia.

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