

Winter Squash

Vegetable Subgroup: Red/Orange

Differing from summer squash, winter squash is harvested and eaten in the mature fruit stage, when the seeds within have matured fully and the skin has hardened into a tough rind. This allows it to be stored well throughout the early winter months and is the reason behind the name. Like summer squash, however, it is a member of the gourd family and encompasses numerous varieties each with their own distinct colors, flavors, and textures. Displaying its versatility, winter squash can be prepared with sweet or savory flavors and pairs well with meats, fruits, and other vegetables.

Storage

- Winter squash can keep for up to three months if stored in a cool dry place. Squash stores best with part of the stem still attached to help retain its moisture.
- Once cut open, store squash wrapped in plastic in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days.
- Cooked squash can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days.
- Frozen cooked squash stays fresh for up to a year.

Preparation and Cooking

Winter squash's characteristic trait of having a thick rind is also one of the most challenging issues when your recipe calls for cubed or peeled squash. To overcome this ominous rind wash squash well and then follow the steps outlined in the following pages or try the following tips:

- If possible, try cooking the squash unpeeled and then scoop out its flesh.
- If the rind is too hard, or the squash needs to be peeled and/or cubed, pierce the squash and microwave it for a few minutes until the squash is soft (about 5-15 minutes). If it is too big for the microwave, heat it until softened in the oven (about 25-30 minutes). Let cool before cutting.

Once the squash is cut in half and seeds removed, it can be quartered, cubed, or sliced if required. Otherwise, cook squash as directed.

If the squash is going to be cooked whole, be sure to pierce the skin in several places to allow steam to escape and prevent squash from exploding.



Cutting Winter Squash

While many recipes begin by calling for cut or cubed winter squash, it often leaves you at a loss for how to get the thick skinned vegetable to that stage. Try the following tips and procedures to help you get the delicious and healthy flesh of these hardy veggies.

Begin by making a cut in the skin of the large squash to prevent the blade from slipping. Place the blade of a large chef's knife into the shallow cut. Using a kitchen mallet, begin tapping the blade at the base of the knife until the squash has been cut through. This technique works best when the blade of the knife is large enough to cover the circumference of the



Clean seeds and fibers from each half before cooking. Cleaning the seeds and fibers out will leave quite a large cavity in the squash.

1 lb AP fresh whole hubbard squash = 4.4-1/4 cup servings of cooked, drained, pared, cubed vegetable



Follow the same procedure for acorn squash



1 lb AP fresh whole acorn squash = 4.7-1/4 cup servings of cooked, drained, pared, cubed vegetable



A butternut squash can be prepared in varying ways, depending largely on the way you are going to present it at the meal. The first step is to remove the stem with sharp kitchen knife.

If the butternut squash is cubed, mashed, or puréed, cut the squash into 2 separate pieces before slicing in half. Remove the upper section of the squash.



Cut the two sections in half using a sharp knife.



1 lb AP fresh whole butternut squash = 7.5-1/4 cup servings of cooked, drained, pared, cubed vegetable

Acorn

Acorn squash has a deeply ridged acorn shape, hard dark green skin and a firm yellow-orange flesh. It has a sweet flavor and is a good source of potassium but contains less vitamin A than the other varieties.

Did you know? *Squash "comes from the Narragansett Native American word askutasquash, which means 'eaten raw or uncooked.'"*



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (70g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	
Calories 30	Calories from Fat 0		
Total Fat 0g			0%
Saturated Fat 0g			0%
Trans Fat 0g			
Cholesterol 0mg			0%
Sodium 0mg			0%
Total Carbohydrate 7g			2%
Dietary Fiber 1g			4%
Sugars 2g			
Protein 1g			
Vitamin A 6%	Vitamin C 15%		
Calcium 2%	Iron 2%		

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup cubes (120g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	
Calories 50	Calories from Fat 0		
Total Fat 0g			0%
Saturated Fat 0g			0%
Trans Fat 0g			
Cholesterol 0mg			0%
Sodium 0mg			0%
Total Carbohydrate 14g			5%
Dietary Fiber 2g			8%
Sugars 3g			
Protein 1g			
Vitamin A 260%	Vitamin C 40%		
Calcium 6%	Iron 4%		

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Butternut

This long bell-shaped variety of winter squash has a smooth beige-tan to orange skin that is softer than that of acorn squash and easy to peel. The flesh is orange, fine textured and mildly sweet in flavor. It cooks more quickly than other hard-shelled squash and is an excellent source of beta-carotene and Vitamin A.

Did you know? *Easily found in supermarkets today, this winter squash is fairly new to consumers; it wasn't introduced commercially until 1944. Butternut squash can be used as a substitute in any recipe that calls for pumpkin.*



Hubbard

Plump in the middle and tapered at the neck, the Hubbard squash is wrapped in a very hard, bumpy skin ranging anywhere from a dark green to pale bluish-green to light golden in color. Inside is a tender, golden yellow, fine grained, rather dry and mealy, dense flesh that offers a mild flavor.

Difficult to peel and cube because of its rigid exterior, Hubbard squash is most often cooked in its skin. Hubbard squash is an excellent source of vitamin A and a good source of potassium.



Did you know? *Hubbard squash can weigh anywhere from five to fifteen pounds.*

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (58g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 25 **Calories from Fat 5**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 5g **2%**

Dietary Fiber 0g **0%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 15% • **Vitamin C 10%**

Calcium 0% • **Iron 2%**

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Spaghetti

Oblong or oval shaped, this yellow skinned squash has a different fleshy interior than the other members of the winter squash category. When cooked, the golden yellow flesh pulls away from the rind in crispy strings resembling spaghetti. While lower in vitamin A and beta carotene, this unique squash is still a healthy meal addition and can be a good low carbohydrate alternative to traditional pasta.



Delicata

The delicata is long and cylindrical and has creamy white colored flesh with dark green stripes. Like the acorn and butternut squash, its relatively thin skin is easy to peel. Inside it has a very sweet and creamy flesh that has led it to often be referred to as the sweet potato squash.

Sweet Acorn Squash

Courtesy of Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program

Ingredients

- 2 acorn squash
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg



Directions

1. Put each squash in the microwave. Heat for 1 1/2 minutes on high. This will soften the squash, and make it easier to cut.
2. Cut each squash in half. Remove the seeds and loose fibers in the middle.
3. Place the squash on an ungreased baking pan. The cut side of the squash should be face-up, and the uncut part of the squash should touch the pan.
4. Pour 2 tablespoons of juice into each half of the squash. Spread it evenly on the inside of each squash.
5. Bake at 400°F for 30 to 45 minutes, until tender. Season with cinnamon and nutmeg. Serves 4.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 of one prepared squash, 1/4 of recipe (246g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 100	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	9%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 8g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 40%
Calcium 8%	Iron 10%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower	

Butternut Squash with Black Beans

Courtesy of Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program

Ingredients

- 1 butternut squash (small)
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion (small, chopped)
- 1/4 tsp red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup water
- 2-16 oz cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 tsp oregano



Directions

1. Heat the squash in the microwave on high heat for 1-2 minutes. This will soften the skin.
2. Carefully peel the squash with a vegetable peeler or small knife.
3. Cut the squash into 1/2 inch cubes.
4. Peel and chop the onion.
5. In a large pan, heat the oil. Add the onion, garlic powder, and squash.
6. Cook for 5 minutes on medium heat.
7. Add vinegar and water. Cook on low heat till the squash is tender, about 10 minutes.
8. Add the beans and oregano. Cook until the beans are heated through. Makes 6 –1 cup servings.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/6 of recipe (246g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 120	Calories from Fat 10
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 270mg	11%
Total Carbohydrate 28g	9%
Dietary Fiber 8g	32%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 6g	
Vitamin A 170%	Vitamin C 35%
Calcium 8%	Iron 15%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower	

Corn & Beans with Acorn Squash

Recipe courtesy of Produce for Better Health Foundation
Cups of Fruits and Vegetables per Serving: ½

Ingredients:

1 acorn squash
1 teaspoon canola oil
1 small onion
1 15-oz. can low-sodium chili beans, rinsed and drained
1 15-oz. can gold and white whole kernel corn, drained
1 15-oz. can low-sodium vegetable broth
hot, cooked rice, for serving

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Place squash directly on the oven rack and bake for 15 minutes, or until softened slightly.

When cool enough to handle, peel squash and cut into 1-inch chunks. Set aside.

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the onion is golden, adding a splash of water to the pan after about 3 minutes to help the onions cook.

Add chili beans, corn, squash, and vegetable broth.

Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the squash is tender. Serve over rice.

Nutritional Information per Serving

Calories: 220	Carbohydrates: 46g
Total Fat: 1.0g	Cholesterol: 0mg
Saturated Fat: 0.3g	Dietary Fiber: 5g
% of Calories from Fat: 4.3%	Sodium: 314mg
Protein: 6g	



Fall Casserole

Recipe courtesy of PA Nutrition Ed. Network
Makes 8-1/2 cup servings

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups winter squash, such as acorn, butternut or hubbard
1 1/2 cups cooking apples, such as Macintosh, Granny Smith or Rome
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

1. Wash and prepare squash and apples (for extra fiber, keep peel on apples).
2. Alternate layers of squash and apples in 8x8 inch pan; end with apples.
3. Sprinkle spices over top layer.
4. Cover with aluminum foil.
5. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 45-60 minutes, until squash is tender.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (80g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 40	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 9g	3%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 40%	• Vitamin C 15%
Calcium 2%	• Iron 2%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

South of the Border Squash Soup

Recipe courtesy of Produce for Better Health Foundation

Think Variety; Think Color: 

Serves: 8

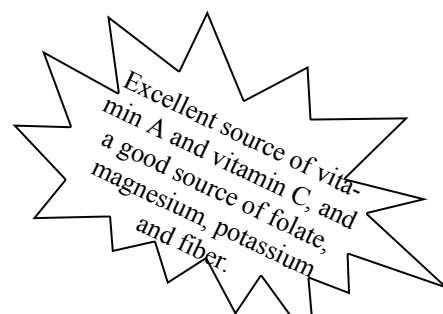
Cups of Fruits and Vegetables per Serving: 1

Ingredients:

2 Tbs. margarine or butter
2 medium onions, chopped
½ cup(s) (1 medium) carrot, chopped
2 clove(s) garlic, chopped
2 ½ lb(s) (1) butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and chopped
5 cup(s) low-sodium chicken broth
1 cup(s) tomato puree
Salt
Black pepper, freshly ground
Lime wedges, for serving



1. In a large saucepan, melt the margarine over medium heat.
2. Add the onions, carrot, and garlic and cook for 3 minutes.
3. Cover the pan. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 3 or 4 minutes longer, or until the vegetables are soft.
4. Stir in the butternut squash, jalapeños, chicken broth, and tomato puree.
5. Bring to a simmer; cook for 30 minutes.
6. Mash the squash to a chunky puree with a potato masher or the back of a spoon.
7. Season to taste with salt and black pepper.
8. Ladle into bowls and pass lime wedges separately to be squeezed into each bowl of soup.



Nutritional Information per Serving
Calories: 128
Total Fat: 3.1g
Saturated Fat: 0.5g
% of Calories from Fat: 20%
Protein: 4g
Carbohydrates: 24g
Cholesterol: 3mg
Dietary Fiber: 4g
Sodium: 465mg