



# Perfect Pumpkins

Pumpkins are fun way to celebrate Halloween, but did you know that of the 40 million bought for Halloween in 2022, half went to waste? That's £32.6 million worth of edible food!

Read on for tips which will mean you can enjoy pumpkins without contributing to the huge mountain of discarded pumpkins each year.

## Buy the right pumpkin

Bigger pumpkins aren't grown for taste, so for a carveable pumpkin that is good enough to eat, buy a smaller pumpkin or gourd and have a sealable pot next to your carving area so you can pop the flesh straight in. You can then use the flesh in soups, casseroles, curries or roast it – it will freeze too. You can still eat larger pumpkins, but they're best cooked in pumpkin bread, pie or cake so the additional fats and sugars will enhance the flavour.

## Paint your pumpkin

This way you can use the whole pumpkin after Halloween, maybe by roasting some slices or in a soup. You can simply scoop out the insides after Halloween, or use food-safe paint and peel after use.

## Eat your seeds

Wash, dry and roast your pumpkin seeds for about 40 minutes at 160° for a perfect breakfast or crumble topping. You can also roast them with spices or a drizzle of honey for a delicious snack.



## Dry your seeds

Wash and dry your seeds to use in a homemade musical instrument or as other sensory toys. You could even keep them to plant next year!

## Donate to a local farm

Some farms and animal sanctuaries now collect pumpkins to feed animals such as pigs, so keep an eye on your local social media pages.

## Compost it

If you have eaten the flesh, then pop the carcass on the compost heap – just make sure you remove the seeds or you might create an accidental pumpkin patch!

# Make pumpkin play dough

- 1 Steam or roast your leftover pumpkin chunks until soft
- 2 Use a food processor or potato masher to turn into a purée with no lumps
- 3 Once cooled, add the vegetable oil to 3tbsp of your pumpkin purée and mix together
- 4 In a separate bowl, combine your baby rice or rice flour, cornflour and ground cinnamon
- 5 Mix your wet and dry ingredients together until it comes together and then knead into a ball to use straight away

## Ingredients

leftover pumpkin or other gourd  
2tbsp vegetable oil  
40g of baby rice or rice flour  
40g of cornflour  
pinch of ground cinnamon

## Equipment

food processor or potato masher  
2 mixing bowls

**Storage:** The play dough will keep for a few days in the fridge in a sealed container, or longer with the addition of salt or cream of tartar.

**Top tip:** The colour won't be bright orange, so you could use food colouring to achieve a spooky orange colour!