



Potatoes

Potatoes



Taste these

- ☐ New
- ☐ Sweet
- ☐ King Edward
- ☐ Jersey Royal
- ☐ Purple Majesty
- ☐ Maris Piper
- ☐ Anya
- ☐ Charlotte
- ☐ Nicola
- ☐ Salad Blue

Pick for the school plot?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Plant it

 Spring

Eat it

 Summer

 Autumn

 Winter

★ Did you know?

- ★ More than 1 billion people eat potatoes around the world, making it one of the planet's most important foods.
- ★ Potatoes were first domesticated in the Andes mountain range in South America, possibly as long as 7,000 years ago. In that part of the world, you still find thousands of potato varieties in all shapes and sizes, like knobbly purple ones and gold and red-striped varieties
- ★ Potatoes were the first vegetable to be grown in space during a NASA mission in 1995.
- ★ For every potato that you plant, you can get between 5 and 20 potatoes in return.

Grow: Are they a fruit or vegetable?

Potatoes are a vegetable. They are part of the Nightshade plant family, which includes tomatoes and chillies. We eat the tubers of the plant, which grow underground.

How do they grow?

Once you've planted the potato tuber, it starts to grow a main stem and leaves. Later, the plant produces more tubers underground, which swell and grow.

Should I grow them?

Definitely. Potatoes are easy and fun to grow. Choose "early" potatoes as they mature quicker than other varieties and plant them in spring. Potatoes can also be grown in very large pots and containers. Sweet potatoes, on the other hand, are much harder to grow.

When are they ready?

Potatoes are ready at various stages in the summer, depending on the variety. New potatoes, for example, might be ready ten weeks after planting, whereas larger "maincrop" potatoes take twice as long.

Shop: what should you look for?

Choose firm potatoes with no blemishes or squishy bits on the skin. Don't worry if they're still covered in soil – this helps to keep them fresher for longer.

How should you store them?

Store potatoes in a paper bag somewhere cool and dark.

Eat: How can you eat them?

You can boil, steam, roast, fry or bake potatoes. Floury potatoes have a fluffy texture and are perfect baked and served with different toppings, or roasted and eaten as part of a Sunday roast. Waxy varieties aren't as fluffy, so they're delicious boiled or steamed and added to a salad. You can also mash potatoes and eat them as a side or as a topping for pies.

Why are they good for you?

Potatoes are a great source of vitamin B6, which helps our nervous system to work properly so we can touch, taste, see and smell.

Key info for teachers



Key facts

- ★ There are around 4,000 varieties of edible potatoes in the world, according to researchers at the International Potato Centre in Peru. In the UK, one of the most famous varieties is the Jersey Royal, which is grown in Jersey with seaweed as a fertiliser.
- ★ Sweet potatoes grow better in tropical and subtropical climates, which is why they are harder to grow successfully in the UK.
- ★ New potatoes, also known as “earlies”, are the first harvest each summer. They are smaller and don't keep as long as the “maincrop” varieties in autumn, which are classically large and can be stored for many months over the winter.

Curriculum links

Literacy/D&T

Mr. Potato Head

Mr. Potato Head was invented by Hasbro and was the first toy to be advertised on television, back in the 1950s. You can find the original advert online. Share this with the children as a basis to invent their own product. They could write marketing materials and possibly film and edit their own advert.

Science

The space-aged tuber

NASA has invented the Quantum Tuber™, an advanced technique for the rapid, soilless growing of potatoes in space. Research this on the internet and use this as inspiration for getting the children to invent their own high-tech fruits and vegetables.

Maths

Weight and calculations

Discovering the amount of new potatoes each original tuber has produced makes harvesting exciting. Use this as a basis for maths challenges, such as weighing the harvest per plant and calculating the average weight of an individual tuber. How many weeks did it take for the different varieties to mature? Alternatively, if you're cooking with peeled potatoes, you could calculate what percentage of the tuber is the skin. Ask questions such as: how much of the potato would you throw away if you peeled 1kg, 5kg or 10kg of potatoes? Would there be enough potatoes for a school lunch?

Art

Beauty and the feast

Look at Van Gogh's painting, The Potato Eaters. Discuss ideas about beauty and how people from different backgrounds are depicted in art. What would these characters be depicted eating nowadays?

Tips for teachers



- ★ Don't forget that you can eat the skin of potatoes – they're full of all sorts of goodness – just give them a good scrub and cut out any eyes or knobbly bits.
- ★ Do not use potatoes that are green or sprouting.

Simple baked potato

Serves 1



Jamie's top tip



There is nothing better when you're hungry than a hot, steaming, fluffy jacket potato. Even simply served with a knob of butter or a drizzle of olive oil, it's one of the most comforting things to eat.

Ingredients

- ☐ 1 baking potato
- ☐ olive oil
- ☐ sea salt

Equipment list

- ☐ Scrubber
- ☐ Fork
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Baking tray
- ☐ Oven gloves



Here's how to make it

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas 5.
- 2 Wash the potato under cold running water, scrubbing well with a scrubber to get rid of any dirt.
- 3 Prick the potato all over with a fork – this will stop it from exploding in the oven.
- 4 Drizzle with 1 teaspoon of olive oil, sprinkle over a tiny pinch of salt, and then rub all over the potato.
- 5 Pop the potato onto a baking tray and use oven gloves to place in the hot oven.
- 6 Bake for 1 hour to 1 hour and 20 minutes, (depending on how big your potato is), or until golden and cooked through.



For nutritional information ask your teacher.

Smoky mixed-potato wedges

Serves 8



Jamie's top tip

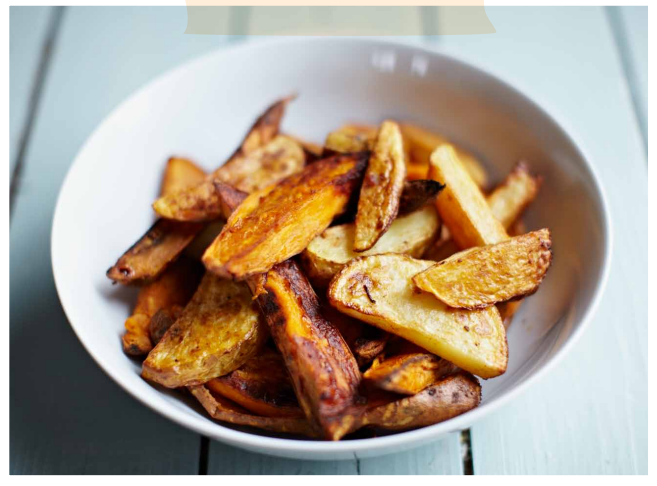
With just a splash of oil and a pinch of seasoning and spice, you can turn the humble potato into delicious homemade wedges.

Ingredients

- ☐ 2 large sweet potatoes
- ☐ 2 medium potatoes
- ☐ sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ☐ 1 teaspoon sweet smoked paprika
- ☐ olive oil

Equipment list

- ☐ Scrubber
- ☐ Chopping board
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ Large mixing bowl
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ 2 large baking trays
- ☐ Oven gloves
- ☐ Fish slice
- ☐ Serving dish



Here's how to make it

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas 6.
- 2 Wash the potatoes under cold running water, scrubbing well with a scrubber to get rid of any dirt (there's no need to peel them).
- 3 On a chopping board, cut each potato in half lengthways, then cut each half in half lengthways. Cut each piece in half again so you end up with 8 wedges, then add to a large mixing bowl.
- 4 Sprinkle over a tiny pinch of salt and pepper, and the paprika.
- 5 Drizzle over 2 tablespoons olive oil, then toss everything together to coat.
- 6 Spread out into a single layer over 2 large baking trays, then bake in the hot oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until golden and cooked through.
- 7 Use oven gloves to remove the trays from the oven, then leave to sit for a couple of minutes (this will make it easier to remove them from the tray), then use a fish slice to transfer them to a serving dish.



For nutritional information ask your teacher.

Simple potato salad with yoghurt dressing

Serves 6, as a side



Try using a range of soft fresh herbs such as, basil, dill, flat-leaf parsley, tarragon or thyme tips for a bit of a change - see what you've got growing in your garden and pick a nice combination.

Ingredients

- ☐ sea salt
- ☐ 750g new potatoes
- ☐ ½ a bunch of fresh chives
- ☐ 1 x **Yoghurt dressing** (see Cucumbers card for recipe)

Equipment list

- ☐ Large saucepan (25cm)
- ☐ Weighing scales
- ☐ Scrubber
- ☐ Chopping board
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ Slotted spoon
- ☐ Colander
- ☐ Serving bowl
- ☐ Measuring spoons

Here's how to make it

- 1** Half-fill a large saucepan with cold water and add a tiny pinch of salt.
- 2** Place on a high heat and bring to the boil. Meanwhile...



- 3** Give the new potatoes a good scrub with a scrubber, then on a chopping board cut any bigger ones in half, leaving the smaller ones whole.
- 4** Finely chop the chives.
- 5** Once boiling, carefully lower the potatoes into the water with a slotted spoon, bring back to the boil, then cook for around 10 to 15 minutes (depending on the size of your potatoes), or until cooked through. Meanwhile...
- 6** Make the **Yoghurt dressing**.
- 7** Once cooked, drain the potatoes over the sink into a colander, steam dry for a couple of minutes, then tip into a serving bowl.
- 8** Drizzle 3 tablespoons of dressing over the hot potatoes, and toss everything together until well coated.
- 9** Have a taste and add a splash more dressing, if needed – remember you can always add more but you can't take it away, so be cautious.
- 10** Pop the lid securely on the jam jar and keep the leftover dressing in the fridge for another day.
- 11** Sprinkle over the chopped chives, toss again, then serve.

Bombay roasties

Serves 6, as a side



Equipment list

- ☐ Large saucepan (25cm)
- ☐ Weighing scales
- ☐ Scrubber
- ☐ Chopping board
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ Teaspoon
- ☐ Small bowl
- ☐ Colander
- ☐ Roasting tray (roughly 25cm x 30cm)
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Wooden spoon
- ☐ Oven gloves
- ☐ Serving bowl



If you're a beginner at gardening, then potatoes are reasonably simple to grow, so give it a try! You can grow them in pots or growbags, so as long as you have a small outside space you can enjoy your own home-grown crop - once you've tasted a potato straight from the garden, you'll be reluctant to go back to shop-bought ones.



Roasting new potatoes with all these wonderful spices, plus some fresh chilli and a whole bulb of garlic really brings them to life and will set your tastebuds tingling - enjoy!

Ingredients

- ☐ sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ☐ 750g new potatoes
- ☐ 2 tomatoes
- ☐ 1 fresh red chilli
- ☐ ½ a bunch of fresh coriander
- ☐ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ☐ 1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
- ☐ 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- ☐ 1 teaspoon garam masala
- ☐ 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ☐ 1 bulb of garlic
- ☐ 1 lemon
- ☐ **optional:** natural yoghurt, to serve

Allergy info



dairy,
mustard



For nutritional information ask your teacher.

