

Potatoes Your Way

Article written by Brenda Aufdenkamp (baufdenkamp1@unl.edu), Extension Educator

Potatoes are the 3rd most important food crop in the world after rice and wheat and the leading vegetable crop in the United States. For many, potatoes are a staple in the kitchen because of their versatility and low cost. Potatoes provide important essential nutrients, including 45 percent of the Daily Value of vitamin C, as well as potassium and dietary fiber, two nutrients that are often lacking in the American diet.



Selecting Potatoes:

- Look for potatoes that are firm, and fairly clean.
- Avoid those with wrinkled or wilted skins, soft dark spots, discoloration, cut or bruised surfaces or greening.

Storing Potatoes:

- Store in a cool (between 45°F to 55°F), and dark space with good ventilation. Do not refrigerate or freeze potatoes.
- Store potatoes away from other vegetables as they can absorb other flavors.
- Do NOT wash potatoes until you are ready to prepare them.

Preparing Potatoes:

- Scrub potatoes under cold running water with a clean vegetable brush.
- Peel potatoes, dice or cut into desired sizes. Sometimes potatoes that are cut and uncooked take on a pinkish or brownish color. Potatoes that become discolored are safe to eat and do not need to be thrown out. The color usually disappears with cooking.
- To preserve the color of cut potatoes, place immediately in cold water. A mixture of 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar and 1 gallon of water can also be used. Limit water soaking to two hours to retain vitamins.

Green or Spouting Potatoes:

- Potatoes that turn completely green should not be used but small spots can be trimmed away. This is caused by too much exposure to natural or fluorescent lighting.
- Cut any sprouts away before cooking or eating potatoes. Sprouts are a sign that the potato is trying to grow. Store potatoes in a cool, dry, dark location to reduce sprouting.

Air Fryer Potato Coins

- 2 medium russet potatoes, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water
 - 2 Tablespoons olive oil
 - Optional seasonings: black pepper, cayenne pepper, garlic powder
 - Optional toppings: shredded cheddar cheese, cooked chopped bacon, chopped green onion, fresh or dried parsley, sour cream
1. Wash hands with soap and water.
 2. Preheat air fryer to 400°F.
 3. Slice potatoes into ¼ inch thick slices.
 4. Drizzle with olive oil and toss lightly with optional seasonings.
 5. Place coins in air fryer basket or rack. Be careful not to overlap or stack coins. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until coins are tender and browned.
 6. If adding toppings, arrange on each coin. Return to air fryer for 2 to 5 minutes until all ingredients are heated and cheese has melted.
 7. Remove potato coins and garnish with sour cream, if desired.
 8. Serve immediately. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the refrigerator.

Makes 2 servings. Each contains 290 calories, 14g fat, 10mg sodium, 10mg 38g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 5g protein

Sources:

1. *Potato Facts and Figures*, International Potato Center: <https://bit.ly/32fJ6EE>
2. *Potato Storage and Handling*, Potatoes USA: <https://bit.ly/3oZWhtml>