

A close-up photograph of a pumpkin being cut open. A large pile of white pumpkin seeds and orange pulp is falling from the top of the pumpkin onto a wooden cutting board below. The background is slightly blurred, showing a kitchen setting.

Squash waste

Food waste in the UK is one of the biggest environmental problems we face - a staggering 6.7 million tonnes of food is thrown away each and every year.

Around 24 million pumpkins will be purchased this October in the UK alone and, sadly, more than half of them will end up in the bin in November.

Cook, carve, compost: We've put together this handy guide to making the most out of your pumpkin.



DID YOU KNOW?



Although we often think of pumpkins as vegetables, they're actually fruit!

Pumpkins, along with cucumbers, tomatoes, and avocados, come from the flowers of their plants.

Pumpkins are good for your hearing!

The high content of potassium in pumpkins can help lower blood pressure and protect against age-related hearing loss associated with drops in potassium levels in the body as we age.

Wonderful, wonky variety...

All of our crop are both beautiful and delicious, with more than 8 different varieties to choose from. The F1 Racer and Harvest Moon pumpkins are better for carving as they're large and hollow.

The Uchiki Kuri and Crown Prince squash both have a particularly sweet, nutty flavour, making them ideal for roasting, or using for soups and stews.



What to do with your incredible edible pumpkin

Handle with care:

As tempting as it is, don't carry it by the handle! The sturdy looking stem is actually pretty fragile.

Storage:

Pumpkins don't spoil easily and will keep for 3-4 months if not cut and kept in a cool, dry, dark place. In fact, the longer you store them the sweeter and nuttier the flavour becomes. (You could be making pumpkin soup until the end of January!)

Once cut, your pumpkin or squash will begin to oxidise and spoil. If you want to carve it, leave it as late as possible to do so.

After carving, you can keep it in a fridge to help it last longer.

Once carved, pumpkins can still be used for cooking (ideally within 48 hours) before it shows signs of spoiling.

Preparation:

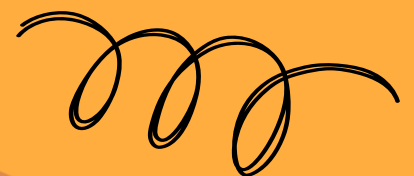
Wash before use - Pumpkins are not always grown organically, you should wash it thoroughly to remove any pesticide residue.

Scoop the gloop!

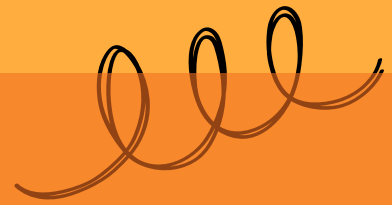
Pumpkin seeds make a super healthy snack - providing a great source of protein, magnesium, copper, and zinc, and good fatty acids. Once scooped out with a spoon, toss the seeds with a little olive oil, sprinkle with salt, and bake in the oven.

(Don't worry if there is a little bit of pumpkin "guts" still attached, this will cook down and add more flavour and nutrition).

Your cooked pumpkin seeds will keep for about one week at room temperature (if you don't munch them all before then!).



Pumpkin Puree



Pumpkin flesh is incredibly versatile. Remove the seeds and then puree the flesh to use in a wide range of delicious sweet and savoury recipes.

How to:

1. Cut your pumpkin into chunks and place on a lined baking tray, skin side up.
2. Bake until soft (about 20-30 mins - test with a fork).
3. Once cooled, peel off the skin (put this in your composter or food waste bin) and blend until smooth.

If you don't have time to get baking straight away, pop the puree in the freezer until you're ready to use it.

The fibrous tissue inside the pumpkin that connects the seeds to the outer flesh is called the pulp. This pumps nutrients and water into the developing seeds.



It might look weird or gross, but it's perfectly edible and packed full of flavour and nutrients. Once it's blended into pumpkin puree, you won't even notice the texture, but it will give a flavour and nutrient boost to your final puree.

A photograph of a pumpkin cut in half on a wooden surface, with a slice of pumpkin pie on a white plate topped with whipped cream. The background is a warm, orange-toned gradient.

Recipe ideas

There are lots of tasty ways to enjoy a pumpkin - here are links to some of our favourite, easy-to-make recipes:

[Warming pumpkin chilli \(Vg\)](#)

[Spicy pumpkin soup \(Vg\)](#)

[Pumpkin coffee cake](#)

[Crusty pumpkin bread](#)

[Tasty muffins \(Vg\)](#)

For even more recipe ideas visit www.goodfoodoxford.org

If you really can't eat it, then feed the earth:

Composting your pumpkin is the best way to return its goodness to the earth from which it came. If you don't have a composter at home, be sure to use your council food waste collection.

Cook Carve Compost

Keep pumpkins out of landfill!



#EatYourPumpkin