



Give Them More  
of the  
Good Stuff!

# Tomato Basics

## Shop and Save

- ✿ Tomatoes are in season between July and September, so they taste great and cost less.
- ✿ Look for tomatoes that are bright in color, and have no darkened areas or bruises under the skin. They should feel firm (not soft), but give slightly when you press on them.
- ✿ Canned tomatoes are usually low-cost and come in many forms: whole, crushed, diced, stewed, or as juice, sauce or paste. Consider low-sodium options.

*Tomatoes have antioxidants for a healthy immune system.*



## Types of Tomatoes

**Red round tomatoes** are the most common; size can vary from 2 inches across to much larger.



**Cherry, grape and pear tomatoes** are small (bite size) with a variety of shapes and colors.



**Roma (Italian or plum) tomatoes** are oval in shape, usually red, and commonly used for canning and making tomato sauce and paste.



**Heirloom tomatoes** include many varieties from the past and have different colors, shapes, flavors and sizes; they are most likely available at farm stands or farmers markets.



## Store Well Waste Less

- Keep ripe whole tomatoes at room temperature in a single layer in an open container; avoid direct sunlight. Try to use within 5 days. Short refrigerator storage (3 days) can help delay softening but may also reduce flavor.
  - ⇒ Refrigerate cut, cooked or opened canned tomatoes in a covered container. Use within 2 days.
- Ripen tomatoes in a closed paper bag or plastic bag with holes. Hold at room temperature. Check daily.
- Store unopened canned tomatoes in a cool, dry place and use within 8 to 12 months for best quality.
- Freeze extra tomatoes:
  1. Wash tomatoes and remove the stem. Leave whole or chop.
  2. Freeze in a tightly closed container or plastic bag. Label with the date.
  3. Best when used in cooked dishes within 8 months.



*For a great on-the-go snack, try cherry, pear or grape tomatoes!*



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. SNAP can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact Oregon Safe Net at 211. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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# Cooking with Tomatoes

## Tomato Melt

### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup shredded **cheese** (try cheddar, mozzarella or a blend)
- 1 Tablespoon **low-fat mayonnaise**
- ½ teaspoon **prepared mustard**
- 2 **English muffins**, halved or 2 **bread slices** (try whole wheat)
- 1 medium **tomato**, cut into 4 slices or diced

### Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine cheese, mayonnaise and mustard.
2. Spread cheese mixture evenly over English muffin halves or bread slices.

### Oven or toaster oven method:

3. Broil or toast until cheese melts, 2-3 minutes.
4. Place tomatoes on each sandwich.
5. Serve 'as-is' or broil to heat the tomato, 2-3 minutes.

### Skillet method:

3. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add sandwiches bread side down.
4. Cover and heat until cheese melts, 7-8 minutes.
5. Top with tomatoes before or after heating.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Makes** 4 muffin halves or 2 open-faced sandwiches

**Prep time:** 5 minutes

**Cook time:** 6-8 minutes

## Quick Tomato Pasta Sauce

### Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons **vegetable oil**
- 2 cloves **garlic**, minced or ½ teaspoon **garlic powder**
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced or crushed **tomatoes** (about 1¾ cups)
- 1 Tablespoon **lemon juice** (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon **salt**
- ¼ teaspoon **pepper**
- ¼ teaspoon **red pepper flakes** (optional)

### Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, heat vegetable oil over medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. (If using garlic powder, omit oil and skip this step).
2. Add tomatoes, lemon juice, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes, if desired. Cook until heated through, stirring occasionally. For a thicker sauce, cook an extra 10 to 20 minutes to allow more of the liquid to evaporate.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Makes** 2 cups

**Prep time:** 5 minutes

**Cook time:** 15 minutes

Go to  
[FoodHero.org](http://FoodHero.org)  
for more easy,  
tasty tomato  
recipes.



**Kids  
Can!**

When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it. Show kids how to:

- wash tomatoes by rubbing gently under cool running water.
- spread cheese mixture on bread.
- open cans safely to avoid sharp lid edges.

1 pound of fresh tomatoes = about 2½ cups chopped or 3 cups sliced