Carrot Basics

Choose firm carrots with even color. Avoid carrots that are soft or wilted. If the leaf tops are still on, they should be bright green.

Baby carrots should be moist but not slimy.

Carrots may cost less at local farmers’ markets.

Canned and frozen carrots can save you money. They work great in side-dishes, soups and stews.

Use the food label to find a canned carrot with less sodium. Rinse and drain the canned carrots to cut more sodium.

Types of Carrots

Carrots come in many colors! If you don’t find them in stores, growing them from seed may be an option.

Baby carrots are a type of carrot picked when they are still small. Baby-cut carrots are actually larger carrots that have been peeled and cut smaller. They come in pre-packaged bags.

Storing whole, fresh carrots:
- Wash the carrots, and trim off the green leaf tops, if present.
- Store the carrots in a plastic bag. Poke a few small holes in the bag to let air in. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.
- Keep carrot sticks for snacks in your refrigerator for up to a week. To prevent carrots from drying out, store in water.

Blanch and freeze carrots for longer storage.
1. Wash, trim, and cut large carrots.
2. Place cut carrots in boiling water for 2 minutes or 5 minutes for small whole carrots.
3. Drain carrots and place in ice water for 2 minutes.
4. Drain and pack in labeled freezer bags or containers. Freeze carrots.

Carrots are high in vitamin A.

You need vitamin A for good eyesight.

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Mashed Carrots

Use fresh, frozen or canned carrots.

**Ingredients:**
- 3 cups sliced carrots (about 6-8 fresh or two cans (14.5 ounces each) or 16 ounces frozen)
- 2 teaspoons butter or margarine
- 2 teaspoons honey or brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon seasoning (optional) – see notes below

**Directions:**
1. Cook carrots until they are very soft.
   - Fresh: Steam or boil.
   - Frozen: Follow package directions or microwave, steam, or boil.
   - Canned: Rinse and drain. Add a small amount of water and heat in saucepan or in the microwave.
3. Stir in butter, honey, salt and pepper.
4. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Notes:**
- Add your favorite seasoning! Try one of these: chili powder, curry powder, onion powder, dried thyme, or dried sage.
- Honey is not recommended for children under 1 year old.

Quick Ways to Use Carrots

- Add chopped or shredded carrots to salads, tacos, or sandwich wraps for extra crunch!
- Add shredded or mashed carrots to spaghetti sauce, meatloaf, soups, chili, or macaroni and cheese.
- Serve carrot sticks with a healthy dip, or add to a meal!

Cooking Carrots

Wash, peel, and cut carrots into slices, sticks or other shapes. Try for pieces that are the same size. No need to peel or cut baby carrots.

**Boil:**
1. Bring about an inch of water to boil in a saucepan with a lid.
2. Add carrots and cover with a lid.
3. Continue to boil until carrots are as soft as you like. Test by piercing with a fork.

**Steam:**
1. Set steamer basket in saucepan with water to just under the basket. Bring the water to a boil.
2. Add carrots and cover with a lid. Steam until carrots are as soft as you like.

**Microwave:**
1. Place carrots in a microwave-safe container. Add about 2 Tablespoons of water for every 3 cups of carrots.
2. Cover container with microwave-safe plastic or lid, leaving a corner open to vent steam.
3. Cook on high until carrots are as soft as you like. Time will depend on size of pieces and total amount of carrots.

Find more recipes for carrots at Foodhero.org