Although there are more than 200 kinds of potatoes sold in the United States, most belong to one of these groups:

**Russet** – medium to large ovals with brown skin and white to pale yellow flesh. Flesh becomes fluffy when cooked. Use for fluffy mashed or baked potatoes.

**Red** – small to medium round or oval shape. Red skin is thin and smooth; flesh is white to yellow. Flesh stays moist and smooth or “waxy” when cooked.

**White** – small to medium round to long shape with thin, light tan skin and white flesh; flesh holds its shape well after cooking.

**Yellow** – small to large; round to oblong; light tan to golden skin; yellow to golden flesh. Slightly sweet to buttery flavor when cooked. Dense, creamy texture.

### Potato Basics

**Potatoes are a good source of potassium and vitamins C and B6.**

### Types of Potatoes

**Shop and Save**

- Choose clean, smooth, firm potatoes with no cuts or bruises.
- Avoid potatoes with sprouts or green skin.
- Potatoes are generally available year round. Buy what you can use within a few weeks for best quality.
- Potatoes are also available in frozen or canned forms.

**Potatoes are naturally free of fat, sodium, and cholesterol.**

**Store Well, Waste Less**

Wash potatoes just before cooking – scrub gently under cool running water.

Sprouts show that the potato is trying to grow. If a sprouted potato is still firm, cut the sprouts away before cooking.

Freezing cooked potatoes at home is not recommended because of texture changes.

Potatoes keep best where it is:

1. Cool, but not refrigerated - Cooler temperatures help potatoes last longer. Avoid refrigeration because it may change the taste and cause a gummy texture.
2. Well ventilated - Use paper bags or plastic bags with holes that allow air flow but keep potatoes from shriveling.
3. Dark - Potatoes exposed to light can develop a green color and a toxin near the surface. Green parts will have a bitter taste; cut them off before cooking.
Cheesy Potato Soup

**Ingredients:**
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- ¼ cup celery, chopped
- 1 teaspoon oil
- 2 cups potatoes, peeled and diced bite size
- 2 cups chicken broth
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 3 Tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 ½ cups nonfat or 1% milk, divided
- 1 cup (4 ounces) reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 Tablespoon bacon bits or 1 slice bacon, cooked and crumbled

**Directions:**
1. In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, sauté onions and celery in oil until onions are clear.
2. Add the potatoes, broth, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 to 25 minutes or until the potatoes are tender.
3. In a small bowl, stir together cornstarch and ¼ cup of milk until smooth. Add remaining milk. Stir into the potato mixture.
4. Cook and stir until thickened and heated through, about 5 minutes. Do not boil.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Makes about 6 cups
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: about 40 minutes

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Parmesan Roasted Potatoes

**Ingredients:**
- 3 cups potatoes cut in 1-inch pieces
- 2 teaspoons oil
- ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese, shredded or grated

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a large bowl, toss potatoes with oil, salt and pepper.
3. Place potatoes in a single layer on a large baking sheet.
4. Roast 25 minutes; sprinkle with cheese; roast 5 to 10 minutes more. Serve warm.
5. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Makes about 3 cups
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 30 to 35 minutes

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Keep Potatoes Low Fat

- Top baked potatoes with plain yogurt or fat-free sour cream, cooked or raw veggies, or cooked beans.
- Make baked oven “fries” rather than frying potatoes in fat.
- Use potato cooking water, low-fat milk or buttermilk in mashed potatoes.

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When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it. 
Show kids how to:
- scrub potatoes with a brush under cool running water.
- use a vegetable peeler.
- measure and stir ingredients.