Food Hero
FoodHero.org

Growing in Oregon
Potatoes

Oregon State University
Extension Service
Master Gardener™

Quick Garden Tips

1 Potatoes are fun to grow! Plant "seed potatoes" with sprouting points (eyes) meant for growing, not potatoes sold for eating.

2 When daytime temperatures reach 60 degrees F, plant small seed potatoes (or pieces of larger seed potatoes) with 2 to 3 eyes in each piece.

3 Plant the seed pieces 3 to 5 inches deep and 6 to 12 inches apart. Water, as needed, to keep the soil damp but not flooded.

4 When the plant is about 6 inches tall, pile a few inches of soil or clean straw around the main stem to form a hill. Add to the hill several times through the season.

5 Growing potatoes in dry soil (that does not stick together when rolled in your hands) or in soil with un-composted organic matter can cause potato skins to scab. Adding too much fertilizer can also cause scab.
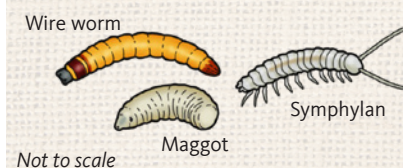
Season and Location

❀ A warm season crop, potatoes grow best in sun; however, they can tolerate some shade.

❀ Potatoes grow well at high elevations.

Container Gardening

❀ Containers for growing potatoes should be at least 18 inches wide and 3 feet deep.

❀ Stand the seed potatoes in a warm, dark place with the eyes pointing up until they begin to sprout. Fill the pot halfway with soil, place potatoes on top, sprouts up, and cover them with 1 inch of soil. Water, as needed, to keep the soil damp. Add soil or straw as the plant grows.

Key Pests and Diseases

Wire worms, symphylans, cabbage maggots, onion maggots, and other soil pests are common.

Wire worm

Maggot

Symphylan

Not to scale

Oregon Gardening Calendar for Potatoes

Central/Eastern

Willamette Valley

Coast

| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN |

⬇ Plant ⬆ Harvest

When and How to Harvest

❀ Since potatoes grow underground, watch for harvesting clues. Dig small "new" potatoes near the soil surface any time after the plants flower and before the green tops die. Dig full-sized potatoes after the tops have died back.

❀ Gently sink a digging fork or shovel 4 to 6 inches straight down into the potato bed. Pull the handle toward you and uproot your potatoes. At the end of the season, be thorough in your potato hunt so you don't miss any!

Storage and Cooking

❀ New potatoes are tender and do not store well. Enjoy them soon after digging, in salads or roasted.

❀ After digging full-sized potatoes, carefully dust soil from the skins and let them sit for a week at room temperature in a dark place. Then store (unwashed) in a cool, dark place with good airflow for up to 6 months. Enjoy potatoes cooked many ways!

Potato Pals

Preparation Time: 10 minutes   **Cooking Time:** 20 minutes   **Makes:** 3 cups

Ingredients

1 pound **potatoes**, cut in 1-inch pieces

1 Tablespoon **vegetable oil**

½ teaspoon **salt**

½ teaspoon **garlic powder** or 2 cloves of **garlic**, minced

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.

2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly grease a large baking sheet.

3. In large bowl, stir together all ingredients.

4. Spread potatoes on the baking sheet, leaving space between pieces.

5. Roast until potatoes are soft, about 20 minutes. Toss a couple of times while roasting.

6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.