



Types of potatoes and when to use them

Whether you're boiling, baking or mashing, this guide will have you covered!

Have you ever stood in the supermarket wondering which potato to choose? With so many varieties available, it's hard to know which one will work best for your dish so here's a guide to the different types of potatoes and what they're best suited to so you'll never be stuck again!

Potatoes are categorised into 3 basic types – starchy, waxy and all-purpose.

Starchy:

Starchy potatoes are high in starch, low in moisture and have a floury texture with creamy white flesh. Starchy Potatoes release a milky, starchy liquid if pricked or cut. They also tend to be long and have a coarser skin.

Varieties:

King Edward
Russets
Sweet potatoes

When to use:

Starchy potatoes are fluffy and absorbent which makes them great for baking and frying so use them to make crispy potatoes, hot chips, wedges, mashed potato cakes or hash browns. They can also be mashed but are susceptible to becoming stodgy when overworked.

When to avoid:

Because of their high starch content, starchy potatoes don't hold together very well when cooked so avoid using them in dishes that require boiling, roasting or slicing like casseroles, potato bakes, gratins or potato salads.

Waxy:

Waxy potatoes have less starch than Starchy potatoes and contain more moisture and sugar. They are often smaller with a waxy outer skin and a creamy, firm and moist flesh.

Varieties:

Dutch Cream
Kipfler
Nadine
Nicola
Patrone
Pink Eye (Southern Gold)
Pink Fir Apple
Purple Congo

When to use:

Waxy potatoes hold their shape well after cooking so are great for boiling, roasting or slicing. Use them to cook casseroles, soups or potato salads.

When to avoid:

Waxy potatoes are not good for mashing because they hold their form and produce a chunky mash. They are also avoided for baking and deep frying.

All-Purpose:

All-purpose potatoes have a medium starch content that fall somewhere in between starchy and waxy potatoes. They have more moisture than starchy potatoes and hold together in boiling water.

Varieties:

Coliban
Desiree
Golden Delight
Otway Red
Pontiac
Red Rascal
Royal Blue
Sebago
Spunta
Toolangi Delight
(‘New’ potatoes)
Yukon gold

When to use:

All Purpose Potatoes are particularly useful for roasting, pan frying, stewing and are good in soups or gratins such as [Potato Dauphinoise](#).

When to avoid:

They can be baked, mashed, or deep fried like a starchy potato, but will not produce the same fluffy texture. You can use all-purpose potatoes for just about anything but if you have a specific dish in mind that lends itself to a starchy or waxy potato, then opt for those types instead.

Potato recipes

Looking for popular potato recipes and tips?

- [How to make crispy potatoes](#)
- [How to make baked potato chips](#)
- [Cheesy jacket potatoes recipe](#)