

# Vegetables



Vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. They are flavorful and colorful and provide vitamins, minerals, cell-protecting antioxidants, and fiber. Try to eat at least 1 serving (1/2 cup) of vegetables at every meal and snack.

## Getting Started

Buy fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables. Enjoy them raw or cooked, on their own or with other ingredients. Use these tips when getting ready to cook vegetables:

- Wash fresh vegetables well and peel them if desired. Trim the ends with a paring knife and remove stems and large or tough seeds. Use a chef's knife to cut large vegetables into smaller pieces.
- Do not buy frozen vegetables with added salt or sauces. Vegetables are the only ingredients listed.
- Choose “low-salt,” “low-sodium,” or “no salt added” varieties of canned vegetables.

## How to Roast Vegetables

1. Preheat the oven to 475° F.
2. Place 2 cups vegetables on a baking sheet and toss with 1 tablespoon olive oil and salt and pepper to taste.
3. Roast vegetables using the cooking times listed in the chart on the next page.

## Equipment

- Paring knife and chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Pot with lid (for steaming vegetables)
- Steamer basket (for steaming vegetables)
- Baking sheet (for roasting vegetables)

## Roasting Time for Vegetables

Vegetable	Roasting Time
Asparagus	15 minutes
Beets	30 minutes
Bell peppers	15 minutes
Broccoli	20 minutes
Brussels sprouts	20 minutes
Carrots	30 minutes
Cauliflower	20 minutes
Green beans	15 minutes
Mushrooms	15 minutes
Onions	30 minutes
Parsnips	30 minutes
Zucchini	20 minutes

## How to Steam Vegetables

1. Add cold water to a pot and insert a steamer basket. The water in the pot should just reach the bottom of the steamer basket.
2. Bring the water to a boil over high heat.
3. Add vegetables to the steamer basket.
4. Partially cover the pot with a lid.
5. Cook the vegetables until tender yet crisp. The chart on the next page shows stovetop cooking times for vegetables that steam well.

## How to Microwave Vegetables

1. Place vegetables in a microwave-safe dish.
2. Add 2 to 4 tablespoons water for every 2 cups vegetables.
3. Cover the dish with a microwave-safe lid or parchment paper.
4. Microwave vegetables using the cooking times listed in the chart on the next page.



## Steaming and Microwaving Times for Vegetables

Vegetable	Steaming Time	Microwaving Time
Asparagus	4 minutes	4–6 minutes
Broccoli	5 minutes	3–5 minutes
Brussels sprouts	10 minutes	7 minutes
Carrots	6–8 minutes	5 minutes
Cauliflower	6 minutes	3–4 minutes
Green beans	5 minutes	3–4 minutes
Peas	3 minutes	1–2 minutes
Zucchini	4–5 minutes	3–4 minutes

## Recipe Ideas

- Drizzle 1½ pounds steamed or roasted asparagus with 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1–2 teaspoons lemon juice.
- Top 2 cups microwaved broccoli with ¼ cup toasted almond slivers or toasted sesame seeds.
- Sprinkle ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg or ¼ cup chopped fresh dill on 2 cups steamed or roasted carrots.
- Add 2 cloves minced garlic to a steamer basket of 1 cup sliced zucchini. Mash the garlic after steaming and add 1–2 tablespoons olive oil to the mixture.

