

## Summer Squash Guide



### Selecting

For all varieties of summer squash, they should be heavy for their size with glossy, unblemished skins. Soft, thin skins are also an indicator of freshness and quality. Hard skins are over-mature with fibrous flesh and hard seeds.

### Popular Summer Squash Varieties

Variety	Characteristics	Tips for Selecting
Zucchini	Similar to a cucumber in shape.	Small ones are more tender than large ones.
Crookneck Squash	Yellow skin, slender, curved neck, slightly sweet, meaty.	Choose those under 10 inches in length.
Straightneck	Light green or yellow color.	Small ones are more tender than large ones.
Scallop (Patty Pan)	Small, disk-shaped, scalloped edges, sweet, tender.	Should be harvested young.

### Storing

Store unwashed summer squash in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator for no more than three or four days. Do not wash until you're ready to prepare them since moisture promotes decay. The flesh may be diced or grated and then frozen for long-term storage, but freezing breaks down the texture. Unless you intend to use frozen squash for baking, it should be blanched for two minutes prior to freezing.

### Using

Peeling is not necessary. Larger squash and crookneck varieties may need to be cut in half and the seeds removed with a spoon prior to slicing. Due to its high water content, summer squash may need to be drained before being used in recipes where additional liquid is not desired. To do so: After cutting, salt lightly and place in a colander in the sink for about 20 minutes, then rinse thoroughly and pat dry. Summer squash is versatile—amenable to steaming, grilling, boiling, frying, sautéing or stir-frying regardless of variety. It is a good addition to vegetable medleys, complementing tomatoes, onions, peppers and okra. Light summer ratatouilles are an especially good use for fresh squash. Large, over-mature zucchini may be used in cakes or other baked goods to add moisture to the recipe.

**Nutrition Information**

Summer squash varieties are a source of fiber, iron, manganese, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, riboflavin, niacin, zinc, and vitamins A, B6 and C.

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