

How to Bake a Fresh Pumpkin

(for pie, etc)

(adapted from: <http://www.instructables.com/member/soundinnovation/>)

by [soundinnovation](#)



This instructable will show you how to prepare and bake a fresh pumpkin for use in pies, breads, and other delectable treats. I'll add a separate instructable for how to actually make the pie and bread later, this is just preparing the pumpkin.

For this instructable, you'll want to use pie pumpkins. These are smaller and smoother than jack-o-lantern pumpkins and taste much better. Pie pumpkins are closer to the size of a small melon, like a honeydew.



2 pumpkins will provide enough baked pumpkin for a pie and a couple of small loaves of bread.

You'll also need:

- A sharp, non-serrated knife
- a cutting board
- some tin-foil
- a large pan for baking



Step 1: Cleaning the Pumpkin

First, you'll want to wash any dirt off the outside of your pumpkin. No one wants to eat dirt.

Then, cut the pumpkin in half. I find it's easier to cut in a square around the stem and that weird spot on the

base, since they're pretty woody areas. It's best to use a non-serrated knife for this, and to be careful. Make a lot of small short cuts rather than trying to go all the way through in one shot.

Once your cuts go all the way around, pry the pumpkin apart. If your cuts are clean enough, this will be easy, but if they're not, you may want to try putting one half on the counter, and leaning on the other half to let your weight do the work for you.

After you've separated your pumpkin halves, use a spoon to scrape out all the seeds and stringy stuff. I usually just throw all this away, but you can save the seeds for toasting if you like.

When you're done, you'll have two nice clean pumpkin halves. Making them this clean before baking saves some trouble after they've been baked and are soft and mushy.





Step 2: Baking and Waiting

Next you'll actually bake the pumpkin halves.

Line a large pan with the tin-foil. This is kinda optional, but it saves a lot of time in clean up since the juices will run out and burn during baking.

Because of the juices, you'll want to use a pan that has edges to it, not just a flat cookie sheet.

Lay your pumpkin halves face down on the pan.

Set the oven to around 350 degrees, or around 180 Celsius.

Stick the pan in the oven, and then wait for about an hour and a half to 2 hours. The actual time will vary depending on how thick your pumpkins are and how hot your oven actually gets.

You can check the pumpkins every so often to see if they are tender by sticking a fork in them.

Once they're nice and soft that means they're done.





Step 3: Cooling and Scraping

Once your baked pumpkin halves have cooled enough to hold, grab one and use a spoon to start scraping the soft pumpkin flesh off the skin and into a bowl.

Don't worry about the burned parts of the skin, but if there are any burned parts of pumpkin flesh, you may not want to include those.

Throw away the leftover skins, or compost them, or whatever.



Step 4: Mash it up!

In the final step of preparing your pumpkin, you're going to mash it.

Grab that potato masher and give it some experience with a new type of produce. Mash to your heart's content. Or until your arms get tired.



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And that's it. Now you have pumpkin that is ready to be used for making tasty pies and breads.

Usually, especially when making pies, I like to mix the pumpkin with the liquid ingredients and then blend the whole mixture to create an extra smooth pie filling.

Enjoy, and go make some tasty goodness.

