

PumpkinPatchesAndMore.org

Click on the printer icon that looks like this:  Print (at the top left, to the right of "save a copy") to print!
See www.pickyourn.org/allaboutcanning.htm for many other canning directions and recipes

Top 10 Best Pumpkin Varieties for Pumpkin Pie and Pumpkin Recipes

There are about 100 varieties of pumpkins on the market each Fall. How do you pick the best one to make a [REAL homemade pumpkin pie, from a real pumpkins \(It is incredibly easy to do, see this page\)](#) do and the pumpkin pie will taste superior to anything you've had before! No problem, we have tested dozens of the best and found which pumpkins and winter squash make the very best pumpkin pies, [pumpkin spice muffins](#), [pumpkin cheesecake](#), [pumpkin cookies](#), [pumpkin bread](#), [pumpkin butter](#), [pumpkin soup](#) and more.

The pumpkin varieties below are the pumpkins that are best for eating because they have:

- smooth-grained flesh - you don't want a tough, grainy, stringy flesh in a pie!
- Sweetness, a high natural sugar content, reducing the need to add sugar,
- A full flavor - a pumpkin that makes a pie, soup, muffin or cookie that pops with flavor.

Don't expect them to be a round, orange pumpkin; the best tasting pumpkins are usually mutant looking things in shades of gray, blue, green with a lumpy exterior... and bright orange, dense flesh inside.

The Top 10 pumpkins for eating, cooking and making pies

Brief description below! See the alphabetized table following the list for details and where to get seeds if you want to grow your own!



1. **Jarrahdale** -

Number one on my list, this deep-ribbed, blue-gray colored heirloom pumpkin, originally from New Zealand, has a deep orange, dense flesh that is sweet, smooth-grained and packed with pumpkin flavor.

And they store in a cool garage, basement or shed for months. I've had them keep for a full year.

They typically weigh between 6 and 10 lbs.



2. **Kabocha pumpkins** -

These are a Japanese variety with dark green skin, yellow sweet, firm flesh that is common to the Far East and Australia.

You can save the seeds to plant next year.

Just clean them off, let them dry on a paper towel, then put them inside a paper envelope

(don't use a plastic bag, they will rot if the container traps moisture.)



3. **Lakota** -

An heirloom variety more common in the midwestern states with great flavor and sweet.

This pear-shaped pumpkin has red skin and black-green striping along with the mild ribbing.

These are small to medium sized pumpkins weigh in around 6lbs.

They have a sweet, dense flesh, similar to butternut squash.



4. **Kakai** -

This pumpkin has thick orange stripes on the skin.

Kakai is a variety that is popular in Australia and Japan, a type that yields the valuable green pumpkin seed oil that some European studies show promotes prostate health. You can not only eat the flesh, but also scoop out the large, dark green, completely hull-less seeds, which are delicious roasted.

The seeds are a bright blue color. Kakai also carves very well making it a real multi-purpose pumpkin. These pumpkins are on the medium size, typically weigh in the region of 6 lbs.



5. **Cinderella (a.k.a., Rouge Vif d'Etampes)**

These French pumpkins have a fairytale look about them that reminds you of Cinderella's pumpkin carriage.

They have moist flesh, sweet, dense that is ideal for use in pies.

You can use them as decoration (uncut or painted) and then eat them at Thanksgiving or Christmas



6. **Neck pumpkins** -

These heirloom pumpkins are like a giant, mutant butternut squash, with smooth, sweet orange flesh. Neck, sometimes called "crockneck pumpkin" is a relative of butternut types. It has sweet tasting, very smooth, stringless, bright orange flesh. It matures quite late and is a full vining type.

It curls when growing and can get 24 to 30" long.



7. **Fairytale** -

Medium to large, dense (heavy for their size) with a flattened, deeply ridged shape; deep tan or orangish at maturity.

Inside, the flesh is sweet, dense, deep orange and can be used for any pumpkin or winter squash recipe.

It pairs well with strong flavors, too, like curries or soups as the flesh holds up well. Fairytale are typically 2-18" across and about 15 lbs.



8. **Long Island Cheese** -

It looks like a flattened wheel of cheese, hence the name. The skin is pale orange, but the flesh is deep orange, dense and sweet. It gained popularity in New York for pumpkin pies.



9. **New England Pie Pumpkin** -

OK, this is the traditional pie pumpkin that most people think of and used traditionally. It's a good pumpkin, much less stringy than larger Jack O' Lantern carving pumpkins. There are many, many variants of the New England Pie Pumpkin, like Sugar Pie, Sugar Snack, Small Sugar, Sugar Bush, Pam Pie, etc. While I think the other squash (above) are better, pie pumpkins have the advantage of being universally available, even sold in grocery stores and Wal-Mart.



10. **Flat White Boer Ford** -

This is a flat pumpkin that looks as though it has been squashed under a truck. They keep for months in a cool, dark, dry place, have a very small seed cavity and dense, sweet flesh.

The skin starts out bright white and turns slightly pink during storage.

3 to 5 inches tall, 8 to 12 inches wide and weighs an average of 10 to 15 pounds.

Honorable mention



Butternut squash - Yep, the common butternut squash, available in almost every grocery store in North American makes a pumpkin pie that is superior to anything made with that gray glop from a can!

It has a very smooth texture, is easy to cook, and following our pie directions, takes only 5 minutes of prep time. Just bake in an oven, cool, lift the skin off and mush it up)

[See this page for our easy pumpkin pie from a real pumpkin \(or butternut squash\) recipe.](#)

The full list of pumpkins and squash for cooking, eating and making pies

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Baby Bear</p>	Eating, decor	105 days. All-America Selections winner. Deep orange, 1 ½ - 2 ½ lb fruits are half the size of normal pie pumpkins with flesh that is sweet and moist.. Ave 8 pumpkins per vine. Excellent storage quality. Between a pie and a mini-pumpkin, flattened, medium orange. Good for pies. The seeds have no hulls, they are great to roast.
 <p>Baby Pam</p>	all-purpose	105 day. Best quality for pie pumpkin. Bright, deep orange skin and thick tan handle. 4lb. Seed treated with thiram. 4-5 fruits per plant.
 <p>Blue doll</p>	eating	A greenish-blue pumpkin that grows from 15 to 20lbs in weight. A deep orange flesh good for pies and soups. Very similar to Jarrahdale.
 <p>Blue Hubbard</p>	eating, Great for pumpkin pies	100 days. An heirloom dating to 1909 by Gregory as Symmes Blue Hubbard. Averages 30 - 40 lbs. Excellent flavor, productivity and storage qualities. It is high in dietary fiber and rich in Vitamin A & C Used in pies, vegetarian stews, cakes, and candies.
 <p>Butternut Squash</p>	eating - Makes excellent pumpkin pies	105 days. Beige skin, with deep orange, smooth-textured seetw, nutty-tasting flesh that improves with a couple months' storage. Fruits avgerage 9" long and weigh 4 to5 lb. Each plant produces 4 or 5 squash. When ripe, it turns increasingly deep orange, and becomes sweeter and richer. It is a good source of fiber,

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
		vitamin C, magnesium, and potassium; and it is a source of vitamin A. Butternut squash can be roasted, sautéed, toasted, puréed for soups such as squash soup, or mashed to be used in casseroles, breads, muffins, and pies. The squash is also used as an alternative diet for Monarch butterfly caterpillars alongside cucumbers.
 <p>Carnival</p>	Eating	Mottled green, yellow and orange acorn squash with excellent flavor. Carnival squash is small to medium in size, 12-17 centimeters in diameter. The flesh is firm, dry, coarse, and pale orange in color with a large and fibrous seed cavity with stringy pulp and many flat, beige seeds. Cooked squash is soft and tender with a fragrant aroma and is slightly nutty, buttery, and sweet, similar to butternut squash. Vigorous, semi-bush vines yield a large number of fruits.
 <p>Cinderella Rouge Vif d'Etampes) (a.k.a.,</p>	decor, eating	The classic fairytale pumpkin that looks like Cinderella's pumpkin carriage. They stack well, and have deep ribbing with a bright orange-red skin. They also have moist flesh that is great for pies. It is also called Rouge Vif d'Etampes.
 <p>Connecticut Field</p>	all- purpose	A large, all purpose pumpkin, good for carving and pies.

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Crown Prince</p>	all-purpose	<p>With a glossy gray-blue skin, and sweet flavorful orange flesh, it is good for decor or eating. It keeps very well and can keep for up to a year in a cool, dark place, like a garage, basement or shed.</p> 
<p>Dickinson Pumpkin</p> 	eating	<p>100 days. Famous for being the main variety that Libbey's uses in its canned pumpkin pie filling. Medium to large beige squash. Average weight 10 to 40 pounds. Roundish elongated shape, 18 inches long by 14 inch diameter.</p>
 <p>Fairytale</p>	decor, eating	<p>Medium to large, heavy for size, flattened, heavily ridged, deep tan at maturity. Vigorous vines had white markings on leaves and showed very little powdery mildew.</p>
<p>Flat White Boer</p>  <p>Ford</p>	decor, eating	<p>a flat pumpkin that looks like it has been squashed under a truck! Wider than it is tall and an asymmetrical shape. They keep well, have a very small seed cavity and dense flesh</p>

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Futsu Black</p>	eating	105 days. This very deep green ribbed and warted squash appears to be almost black. The golden orange flesh is delicious with a strong taste similar to hazelnuts. Fruits are large with weights close to 10 pounds a possibility. An excellent storage variety. Flavor develops in storage. Black Futsu is an heirloom Japanese pumpkin. Great roasted, fried in tempura, pureed in pies or soups, or pickled! 3-5 fruits per plant, averaging 3 lbs. each.
 <p>Golden Hubbard</p>	eating	90-105 day. Deep golden-yellow flesh has excellent flavor and a fine-grained texture. Nubby skin 12-14 lb and hubbard shape.
 <p>Hybrid Pam</p>	eating, decor	100 days. Pie size, slightly wider than tall, dark orange, thick long peduncle. Flat-round fruit, 7" in diameter and averaging 4 to 5 lbs.
 <p>Jarrahdale</p>	Excellent for cooking and pies!	100 days This Australian variety is very unusual. The skin is a very attractive ribbed blue-gray. Ten pound fruit can be 34 inches around and the flesh is orange and sweet. Stores well. Medium size, flattened and ridged, dull blue-green. This makes the best pumpkin pies!

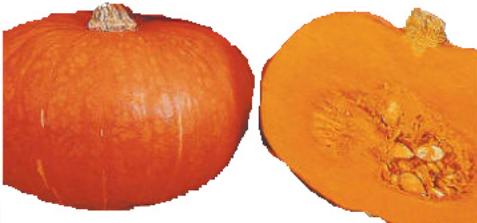
Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Kakai</p>	all-purpose.	100 days - Striking, medium-small, avg. 5-8 lb., black-striped pumpkins. Kakai is a variety of the Austrian type that yields the valuable green pumpkin seed oil that some European studies show promotes prostate health. Semi-bush, short-vine plants. Avg. yield: 2-3 fruits/plant. After displaying the (un-carved) pumpkins next fall, you can scoop out the large, dark green, completely hull-less seeds, which are delicious roasted.
 <p>Kabocha pumpkins</p>	Eating Very popular for pies	<p>These are a Japanese variety with dark green skin, yellow sweet, firm flesh that is common to the Far East and Australia.</p> 
 <p>Kentucky Field</p>	Eating	113 days. Traditional heirloom beige-skin, orange flesh, perfect for pies and canning. The vines are extremely prolific Also excellent in storage.
 <p>Lakota</p>	eating	100 days. A pear-shaped heirloom variety from the midwestern United States. Both decorative and good for eating. The pear shaped fruit can go as large as 7 pounds. The flesh is a golden hue with a fine flavor. The skin color is a variegated green and orange although some fruit will be entirely orange and others entirely green. They have a sweet taste like a butternut squash.

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
<p>Long Island Cheese</p> 	<p>Eating - heirloom pumpkin for pies</p>	<p>90 days. This East Coast heirloom is thought of as a great pie squash. The name comes from the similarity in shade and shape to a big wheel of cheese. The buff colored skin reveals attractive, firm orange flesh. Fruits are 6-8 pounds and storage qualities are excellent.</p>
<p>Marina di</p> 	<p>eating, decor</p>	<p>Blistered, bubbled, slate blue-green rind. Avg. 6-12 lb. bumpy squashes make a wild yet subdued ornamental statement for fall. Amy Goldman in her new book, <i>The Compleat Squash</i>, describes this Italian seaside specialty as <i>deliziosa</i>, especially for gnocchi and ravioli, and a culinary revelation.</p>
<p>Chioggia</p> <p>Musque de</p> 	<p>eating, decor</p>	<p>125 day. Ribbed, flat, tan fruits 8-15 lb. Thick, deep orange moderately sweet flesh. Sold in cut wedges in the South of France. 2 fruits per plant. .</p>
<p>Provence</p> 	<p>eating Heirloom, great for pies</p>	<p>120 days. Neck, sometimes called "crockneck pumpkin" is a relative of butternut types. It has sweet tasting, very smooth, stringless, bright orange flesh. It matures quite late and is a full vining type. It curls when growing and can get 24 to 30" long. It is a high yielding, vining pumpkin.</p>

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 New England Pie	eating, decor	The classic New England pie pumpkin. Dark orange-skinned pumpkins in a range of small sizes, typically 4-6 lb. Although not as sweet as squash, the well-colored, orange flesh is relatively starchy, dry, and stringless. A well-known mini Jack O'Lantern type for pies.
 Peanut Pumpkin (a.k.a, Galeux D' Eysines Squash) 	eating, decor	100 days. From Tranzault, France. Pink, shaped like a wheel of cheese, covered with beige bumps that look like peanuts. The bumps are actually deposits of sugar in the skin which indicates how sweet the flesh is when cooked. In France, it is used for soups, sauces, and sautéed. Average weight 15 to 25 lbs. Stores very well, for months.
 Pik-a-Pie	eating, decor,	95 - 100 days. Pie size, round, medium orange, with somewhat thick peduncle. Short vines. Vines all dead at harvest.

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Porcelain Doll</p>	<p>eating, decor</p>	<p>110 days. Light pink skin with deep orange sweet, dense flesh. Excellent for baking, pies.</p>
 <p>Orange Hokkaido (also called Red Kuri)</p>	<p>eating</p>	<p>92 days. A teardrop-shaped, thin skinned orange colored winter squash, related to Hubbard squash.</p> 
 <p>Rouge Vif d'Etampes</p>	<p>eating, decor</p>	<p>95 day. Deeply ribbed flat Cinderella style pumpkin. Can reach 25 lbs. Deep orange-red skin with outstanding sweet moist thick flesh, Very flattened, ridged, bright reddish-orange, with thin peduncle.</p>
 <p>Rumbo</p>	<p>eating, decor</p>	<p>100-120 days. 14-15 lb, looks like a Cinderella pumpkin with superior flavored dark orange-yellow flesh and deeply ribbed orange-yellow shiny skin</p>

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 Small Sugar	eating, decor	105 days. An older, heirloom pie pumpkin, said to be a smaller variety of the Connecticut Field pumpkin. Mr. Burpee introduced it in 1887. About 10" in diameter; 5 to 8 lbs. The skin is a deep orange-yellow with very fine-grained, sweet and sugary flesh. It keeps well.
 Snack Jack	eating	95 day. Pie size, slightly taller than wide, medium orange, slightly thin peduncle. Hull-less seeds good for roasting. Bright orange 2 to 3 pounds (1 to 2 kg) pumpkins with good flavor for pies. Semi-bush vines
 Speckled Hound	eating, decor	100 days. Orange skin with green splotches. Yellow-orange, dense flesh. High yielding. Oblate shape with shallow ribbing. Averages 3-6 lb. and about 8 per plant. 
 Spirit	all- purpose, eating, carving, decor	100 days 100 day. 10-12 lb bright orange-gold. Short 4-5 foot vines. Flesh good for pies and canning. 1997 AAS Winner.
Sunshine	eating, decor	80-95 day. Vitamin-rich bright orange flesh of this Kobocho-type winter squash is thick, creamy-smooth, stringless with an outstanding sweet, nutty flavor. Space saving 6-8 ft vines yield good supply of 3-4 lb fruit. 2004 AAS Winner.

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Hybrid</p>		
 <p>Sweet Lightning</p>	eating, decor	100 day. 1lb, edible ornamental, creamy-yellow, orange-striped 3"x5" fruit. Semi-bush vines Flavor is very sweet . The flesh is smooth and creamy when baked.
 <p>Sweet Sugar Pie</p>	eating	90 - 115 day. Excellent for pies and canning . Orange-yellow thick meaty flesh. Small, round, dark orange skin 6-8 lb.
 <p>Turk's Turban</p>	eating, decor	95 Days. multi-colored, buttercup-type squash striped with silver, green, and white with a orange-red base 7-9" across. Averages 3-5 lb with 2 or 3 fruits per plant
 <p>White Pie</p>	all-purpose, eating, decor	A round or oval-shaped pumpkin with a slightly off-white skin. Sweet, smooth-textured flesh that good for pies.

Pumpkin Variety Name	Best uses	Description - number of days is minimum to grow one from seed under best conditions
 <p>Winter Luxury</p>	eating, decor	85-100 day. Very productive medium 10 inch diameter with finely netted golden russet color. Deep golden thick sweet flesh is rated among best for taste and texture. Winter Luxury is an heirloom variety that dates back to the late 1800s.