

## French Fries Cooking Guide for Potatoes

French Fries are quick to prepare and are a low food cost. They're popular all year round, any time of day or night. Not all potatoes will produce good french fries. For good fries potatoes need a high solids content to ensures a distinct, mealy texture and hearty flavor. They also absorb less oil, producing crispier fries. The low moisture content means less shrinkage for improved yield and extended plate coverage. Most russet potatoes will produce good french fries. The russet nugget variety will produce excellent fries. Proper storage temperatures are necessary to avoid sweet or dark fries so don't keep your potatoes in the refrigerator if you are going to make fries.

### Ideas

"Plain" French fries are as popular today as ever, but a variety of dips or toppings can make them more exciting. Try salsa, blue cheese or ranch-style dip, pesto mayonnaise or honey mustard dip for variety. Most toppings can be made "Healthy" by using low- or non-fat dairy products or oils.

### Preparation

For the best yield when serving hand-cut french fries, use U.S. grade No. 1 fresh potatoes, 7 - 15 ounce packed 90 to 70 [count](#) in 50 lb. cartons. Great fries can be made by keeping the skin on to enhance the homemade appearance and flavor. Fries made from peeled potatoes should be chilled after cutting in cold water for 10 minutes to 30 minutes before frying, to ensure maximum crispiness and so they don't stick together while frying. To prevent darkening, add citrus acid or vinegar to the water solution. Spin dry before frying, to avoid water spattering and to reduce fat absorption Always use clean oil to fry potatoes. Make sure oil is the proper temperature before frying potatoes. Frying potatoes in cold oil will result in more oil absorption by the fries. The oil is the proper temperature when the fries don't sink when dropped in and bubbles remain on top of the oil.

Potato Type	Average amount needed for 10 - 4 oz servings	Cooking time in 360 degree F Oil	Average Weight from 4 lbs. Pre-cooked Weight
Whole, Un-peeled 1\4" Fries	4.5 lbs	3 ½ Minutes	2 lbs. 12 oz.
Jacket Fries (8 cut)	4 lbs.	3 Minute	2 lbs. 10 oz.
Shoe String Fries	4 lbs.	3 Minutes	3 lbs.
Round Cut Fries	7 lbs.	3 ½ Minutes	1 lb. 10 oz.

Its best that fresh fries be blanched. Many people have found they get a crispier finished fries by blanching potatoes in hot oil to pre-cook fries and then finishing them in a final fry before serving. Fries are completely cooked during the blanching stage where a lower temperature is recommended to allow the potato to cook slowly without becoming golden brown. After blanching, allow fries to cool to room temperature or, preferably, refrigerate fries in uncovered containers before the final fry to a golden brown.

### Blanching and Finishing Guide

Type of Fries	Blanch		Finish	
	Oil Temperatures	Cooking Time	Oil Temperatures	Cooking Time
Whole, Un-peeled 1\4" Fries	350 degrees F	3 minutes	365 degrees F	2 to 2 ½ minutes
Jacket Fries (8 cut)	350 degrees F	5 minutes	365 degrees F	4 minutes

Shoe String Fries	350 degrees F	1 3/4 to 2 minutes	365 degrees F	1 ½ minutes
Round Cut Fries	350 degrees F	4 minutes	365 degrees F	3 minutes

## Oven Baked Fries

A fast and easy way for fries is baking them in the oven. Cut potato in strips or round slices. Soak them in cold water for 10 minutes. Place on a cooking pan with raised edges. Salt and cover with oil. Bake in the oven at 450 degrees F for 30 minutes turning them occasionally.

### Fry Tips

- Overfilling the fry basket can result in limp fries, excess color variation and stuck together fries.
- Store raw potatoes at 55°F. Too cold a temperature will result in sugar streaking or fries that look golden but are not thoroughly cooked.
- To ensure proper fry color, make sure oil temperature is correct and not too hot, fries are left in oil for correct amount of time, and oil is not too old or dirty.

Never hold fries for more than 10 minutes. Hold at 300°F in a warming cabinet or at 100° - 120°F under a heat lamp or in a warm oven. Under-frying, salting too soon and leaving a basket over the fryer too long will result in poor texture and limp fries. To prevent excessive oil usage, drain baskets by shaking lightly, or increase frying. When frying the Norkotah variety, allow for more cook time by reducing the temperatures for blanching or finish frying.