



## CULINARY LEARN AND SHARE

# The Scoop on Squash Freezer & Refrigerator Preparation

The coolest thing about winter squash is that it can be safely stored in a cool, dry space for several months...just don't forget it's there! If you want to prep your squash to use later in the week or freeze it, here's some tips to make sure your dishes look and taste as delicious as if it was made fresh.

### Acorn, Banana, Buttercup, Butternut, Hubbard, Spaghetti Squash

**BONUS:** Winter squashes make excellent baby and toddler food, whether it's pureed or prepared as soft, bite-sized cubes. What a great way to get your tiny tot to fall in love with vegetables early!

#### Ingredients/Equipment

- 1 medium-size squash
- Large microwaveable glass cookware or sauce pot
- Hand blender, blender, or potato masher
- Zipper-top bags/storage containers for freezing
- Microwave or stove top
- 1 sharp chopping or butcher's knife
- Large soup or serving spoon

#### Directions

**Get the squash** Ripe squash's color is deep, the rind should be hard. Wait a few weeks to cook if color is pale.

**Wash the squash** Rinse whole squash in cold or lukewarm water using your hands or a gentle brush.

**Slice the squash in 1/2 or 1/4s** Take a sharp knife and carefully cut the squash in 1/2. You can cut it again (into 1/4s) to make seed removal easier and to better fit into your cooking container.

**Scoop out seeds and stringy pulp** Just like making a jack-o-lantern from a pumpkin, you need to scoop out the loose "guts" from the squash.

**Cook the squash until soft** For microwaving, put squash sections in a glass cookware with 2-3 inches water. Cover if possible. Cook 15 minutes on high. Check for softness. Repeat in 7-minute increments until it is soft enough to scoop the flesh. 20-30 mins.



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732.729.0880



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If cooking on stovetop, put pieces into medium pot with 2-3 inches (6 cm) of water, cover, and low boil for 30-40 mins. Checking every 15 mins. Add water if too low. Cool off until it can be handled easily.

*Other ways to cook the squash are in a steamer, pressure cooker, oven. The key is to cook until it is soft!*



**Scoop out cooked squash** Using your large spoon gently lift and scoop the cooked flesh out of the skin. It should separate easily in large chunks.

**Puree the winter squash\*** Blend or mash to a smooth consistency.

*\*Spaghetti squash is one squash where an unmashed texture is part of its appeal. Peel/flake it from the skins with a fork instead.*



**Transfer & store** Cool completely. Spoon into freezer bags or containers. Seal, label, and store. Create easy portions for baby food. Divide puree among clean ice cube trays. Freeze for a few hours. Empty cubes into a freezer bag, label, and store.

### Directions for Preparing Squash for Refrigerator Storage

Wash squash with hands or a gentle brush. Peel rind with a vegetable peeler. Cut into 1/4s for easier handling. Scoop seeds and stringy pulp with a large spoon. Place onto cutting board with inside facing down. Slice into 1" (2.5cm) wide melon-like wedges and then cut into 1" (2.5cm) cubes. Transfer cubes to a storage container with lid or in zipper-type freezer bag. Sprinkle some water inside to keep squash moist or marinate your cubes with olive oil and your favorite herbs and spices. Seal, shake, and store in fridge. Cook within 2-5 days.



Recipe Adapted from: [https://pickyourown.org/freezing\\_wintersquash.htm](https://pickyourown.org/freezing_wintersquash.htm)



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