



Apples

Fun Facts: Apples are the second most popular fruit in the U.S. Johnny Appleseed's real name was John Chapman. Many towns celebrate autumn with an apple festival.

Selecting Fresh Apples: Choose a firm apple with smooth, bright skin. Ripe apples have a cream, yellow or light green color in the skin around the core and stem. Avoid soft, bruised or decayed apples, and those with shriveled or broken skin. Selecting the best apple from among the 100 commercial varieties depends on the season, how you will use it, and your taste preferences. Some are more tart, some are crisper, etc. Red Delicious, McIntosh and Winesap apples are popular varieties to eat fresh. You might try Gala, Braeburn, Empire, Jonathan, Fuji, Golden Delicious and Granny Smith apples to eat fresh and for cooking. Rome Beauty apples are better when used for cooking.

Measuring Fresh Apples

1 pound = 3 to 4 medium apples = 2 3/4 cups diced = about 2 cups cooked sauce
1/2 cup fresh, diced, with peel = about 2 1/4 ounces by weight = about 62 grams

Handling, Ripening and Preserving: Refrigerate unwashed apples in a perforated plastic bag at 32-35° F. in the fruit drawer. Apples ripen 6-10 times faster at room temperature than they do in the refrigerator. Store away from raw vegetables and strong-flavored foods. Apples give off a natural gas that can help other fruits and vegetables ripen more quickly. They stay fresh for several weeks, and at times for up to 6 months. **To freeze apples**, rinse, peel, core and slice. Sprinkle with a mixture of 1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid dissolved in 3 tablespoons water. Freeze in a single layer on trays. Pack into freezer bags, leaving 3 inches air space. Squeeze out air, seal and date.

Preparation and Serving: Rinse apples under cold running water. Peel if desired, but much of the fiber is in the skin. To prevent cut apples from browning, dip slices in 1 teaspoon orange, lime or lemon juice mixed with 1/3 cup water. Apples blend tartness, sweetness and bitterness. They are easy to serve with meals or snacks. Enjoy whole or sliced fresh apples, as is or with a dip, or shred/dice and add to salads, main dishes, cooked vegetables, baked goods, etc. For variety, choose applesauce, baked apples, apple juice, pasteurized cider or dried apples.

Nutrition Facts for one serving, which is 1 medium apple (with the peel): Calories 80; Protein 0 grams; Carbohydrates 22 grams; Fat 0 grams. Apples contribute fiber and healthful phytochemicals, antioxidants and other nutrients to the diet.

References: www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/apples; ESHA Food Processor; www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf661.pdf; www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/FNTR2/MF1187.pdf; Food for Fifty, 11th edition, 2001, by M. Molt, Prentice Hall

Prepared by Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE, Assistant Professor, Department of Human Nutrition. Aug. 2003.
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, Manhattan, Kansas.
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