Sweet Potatoes are usually bright orange in color but can be found white, red, pink, violet, yellow, and even purple. It is a starchy, sweet-tasting root and the whole sweet potato is edible, including the skin. The skin of the sweet potato is very nutritious, and most of the fiber content is found in them. For baking and roasting consider leaving the skin on. If you are making a pie, soup, or sweet potato casserole, then the sweet potato should have the skin removed.

**Ways to Prep Sweet Potatoes:**

**Safety first:** Wash the sweet potato under clean water. It is a good practice to use a vegetable brush to lightly scrub.

Remember to avoid bare hand contact with any ready to eat food.

Use the right knife for the job: A Chef’s Knife.

**Ways to Cook Sweet Potatoes:**

**BOIL:** Cut into chunks and place into a pot. Cover with water, lightly salt (1/2 tsp), cover and bring to a boil. Cook for approximately 25 – 30 minutes, or until tender. This method produces a moist and soft sweet potato that can be mashed or pureed, but it does not enhance their flavor.

**BAKE:** Pre-heat oven to 400F. Pierce the sweet potato with a fork or paring knife, rub olive oil and salt over the sweet potatoes. Place on a lined baking sheet and cook for 45 – 50 minutes, or until tender. Another option would be to peel the sweet potato then cut into 1/2” cubes, toss with olive oil and salt. Place on a lined baking sheet and cook for 30 – 40 minutes, or until tender. This method caramelizes the potatoes’ starchy flesh. Both methods will result in a more flavorful and sweeter product compared to boiling; and can either be eaten as is or used in other recipes such as sweet potato pie.

**SAUTE:** This process can be used with shredded sweet potato, small dice, raw Julienne, or par-cooked larger pieces. In a hot sauté pan, add olive oil and then the sweet potato. Season with salt, pepper, and any other desired seasoning. Stir or pan toss frequently. Add other ingredients if needed. An example of this would be sweet potato hash, using either shredded or diced sweet potato.

**PUREE:** Take either the boiled or the baked sweet potato and place into a blender, or food processor and blend until smooth.

Michael DuBose  
Culinary Specialist  
Georgia Department of Education School Nutrition  
michael.dubose@doe.k12.ga.us