

## 7 Recipes for Using Pumpkins

So now that you know how healthy pumpkins are – you're probably wondering about the best way to use them – other than in a pie.

Never fear! There are a ton of ways to put the power of pumpkins in your diet. With most of the recipes below, you can choose to substitute fresh-cooked pumpkin for canned pumpkin and vice versa.

### 1. Pumpkin Oatmeal



Mixing some pumpkin into a bowl of oatmeal is a great way to start your day. It's easy to add some pumpkin puree to your rolled oats as you cook them on the stove. You'll find this to be a delicious breakfast dish for the fall season.

- Get [Pumpkin Oatmeal Directions](#) from Greatist.com
- Check out a [Vegan Pumpkin Oatmeal Bake](#) recipe from Chocolate Covered Katie

You'll really be boosting your fiber intake when you combine oatmeal and pumpkin. That's a breakfast that will keep you going all day long.

### 2. Roast Your Own Pumpkin Seeds



Don't just toss out those pumpkin seeds after you and the kids carve a jackolantern for Halloween! Rinse the guts off of them and roast them yourself for a tasty, healthy snack.

This is really easy. Once you have the seeds cleaned off and patted dry, coat them in melted butter or olive oil and then season them with sea salt or whatever you like. You could make a spicy version, a garlic version, or a black pepper version of the seeds.

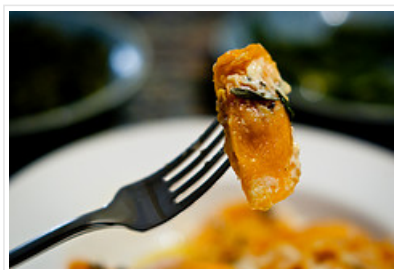
Finally, spread them out on a baking sheet and stick them in the oven.

There's different advice for how long to roast pumpkin seeds. The lower the temperature and less exposure to heat – the more nutrients are preserved. Of course, roasty, salty and crunchy seeds taste the best. Some recipes will tell you to bake them at 350-degrees for 45 minutes, others will

say 200-degrees for 20 minutes.

So experiment, and find out what you like.

### 3. Pumpkin Ravioli



Sounds a bit strange at first – but don't knock pumpkin and pasta until you try it. This is the perfect way to make pumpkin the star of your meal. It's a rich and delicious dish that typically combines pumpkin puree with ricotta cheese and a savory sauce.

But you're probably wondering how you stuff raviolis if you don't want to make homemade paste. Well, one option would be to use wonton wrappers, as they do in a [pumpkin ravioli dish on Health.com](#).

If you're feeling ambitious and want to try your hand at making pasta – check out the recipe on the foodie blog [Eat Yourself Skinny](#).

Pumpkin ravioli could be a very impressive thing to put on plates when you want to show off in front of your dinner guests!

### 4. Pumpkin Parfait

Let's be honest, the best way to enjoy pumpkin is as a decadent treat full of spices like nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon. You've had pumpkin pie and pumpkin bread full of chocolate chips – but how does a pumpkin parfait sound?

You can spoil yourself with this [pumpkin parfait recipe from the Food Network](#) that includes dark rum, heavy cream and comes topped with ginger snap cookies.



If you'd rather mix up a healthier parfait, there are recipes for that too!

- Check out the Paleo Pumpkin Parfait from [PaleOMG.com](http://PaleOMG.com)
- Try this lo-cal version called the [Skinny Pumpkin Parfait](#)

## 5. Pumpkin Energy Bars



Remember – pumpkins are a great way to refuel because of all that potassium. So why not make some homemade energy bars?

Just imagine going for a run outdoors and enjoying the autumn leaves followed by a chewy treat with all the flavors fall.

- Here's an Energy Punching Pumpkin Bar recipe from [WomensRunning.com](http://WomensRunning.com)
- There's a vegan-friendly recipe

from [NutritionistInTheKitch.com](http://NutritionistInTheKitch.com)

- Or try Cranberry-Pumpkin Seed Bars from [Food & Wine](#) magazine

Not only will it be super healthy, but you may also be saving money if you regularly get store-bought energy bars.

## 6. Pumpkin Soup



This is a great way to take fresh pumpkin and turn it into a savory soup that warms you up from head to toe.

It could be a fun first round to a fancy Thanksgiving feast. You can really impress your guests if you serve it up in a bowl made out of a pumpkin shell! And some chefs even recommend pouring pumpkin soup over your leftover turkey before you eat it.

- Try a Pumpkin Soup with Crispy Sage from [FoodieCrush.com](http://FoodieCrush.com)
- Mix up the from-scratch version found on [ThePioneerWoman.com](http://ThePioneerWoman.com)

There are a lot of different ways to turn pumpkin into a steamy soup. You could even try this recipe for [Turkey Pumpkin Chili](#) from Whole Foods Market.

## 7. Pumpkin Cheddar Mac



What kid doesn't love a bowl of creamy macaroni and cheese? In fact – most grown-ups do too!

But maybe you feel a little guilty feeding the kids starch, butter and gooey cheese multiple times per week. Here's a way to pack your mac with the health benefits of pumpkins.

There's a very cool recipe we found on the [Taste and Tell blog](#) that originally came from Rachael Ray. It uses penne noodles with pumpkin and even some of the typical spices that go with it. So you should expect a different flavor to this mac and cheese. It may be for a more-defined palate - but it only takes 30 minutes to make.

If you're afraid the younger members of your family won't appreciate the complex flavors – try this simpler [Pumpkin Mac and Cheese](#) recipe from The Stir.

## How Do You Use Pumpkin?

Got some tasty pumpkin recipes of your own. Tell us what you do with pumpkins and pumpkin seeds!

Leave a comment below and let us in on your secrets. Or put up a link to your favorite pumpkin recipe.

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- Oatmeal – [GucciBeaR](#)
- Roasted Seeds – [Rachelle @ Mommy? I'm Hungry!](#)

- Ravioli – [stijn](#)
- Parfait – [shutterbean](#)
- Energy Bars – [knitting iris](#)
- Soup – [ccharmon](#)
- Mac & Cheese – [Seoulful Adventures](#)