



# Carrots

**Fun Facts:** Carrots can get sunburned while growing. The sunburned area turns green. When carrots were first grown in France, they were not eaten but instead their feathery leaves on top were used in women's hair, hats and clothing.

**Selecting Fresh Carrots:** Choose short or long carrots, but ones that are no more than 1 1/2 inches around. Look for smooth, firm, crisp carrots with a small core and a deep orange color from top to bottom. Avoid oversized carrots because they have less flavor and may be tough and woody. Avoid wilted, soft or slimy carrots.

## Measuring Fresh Carrots

1 pound = about 5 medium carrots = 4 cups shredded = about 2 1/2 cups diced cooked  
1/2 cup diced cooked = a little less than 3 ounces by weight = about 80 grams

**Handling and Preserving:** Cut off the green leafy tops close to the top of the carrot. If you plan to cook the leafy tops, such as in soup or a stew, refrigerate them separately and use within 1 or 2 days; they spoil quickly. Brush off any loose dirt. Refrigerate unwashed carrots in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable drawer, away from fruits. Crispness is maintained by preventing water loss. Carrots usually stay fresh for several weeks, and at times for up to 6 months. **To freeze,** select tender carrots. Cut off ends, wash, and peel. Place small whole carrots in boiling water for 5 minutes. Cut larger carrots into thin slices, cubes or strips and boil for 2 minutes. Drain immediately and place them in ice water for 5 minutes. Drain and package into freezer bags or containers, with 3 inches of air space. Seal, date and freeze.

**Preparation and Serving:** Scrub carrots under cold running water with a vegetable brush to remove all dirt. Cut off ends, and areas that are green instead of orange near the top. Peel if desired. Carrots are a popular, naturally sweet vegetable. They add lots of nutrition and color, but few calories. Raw or cooked, carrots are easy to serve. Try them whole, shredded, chopped, juiced, boiled, steamed, stir-fried, baked, roasted or grilled. Grate and add to salads, main dishes, sandwiches, baked goods, etc.

**Nutrition Facts** for one serving, or 1/2 cup sliced raw or cooked carrots: Calories 30-35; Protein 1 gram; Carbohydrates 6-8 grams; Fat 0 grams. One serving provides large amounts of the healthful antioxidant, beta carotene, which is converted into vitamin A after being eaten. Carrots contribute other nutrients to the diet, too.

**References:** [www.urbanext.uiuc.edu](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu); Food for Fifty, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, 2001, by M. Molt, Prentice Hall; ESHA Food Processor; [www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf661.pdf](http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf661.pdf); [www.aboutproduce.com](http://www.aboutproduce.com); [www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/MF1181.pdf](http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/fntr2/MF1181.pdf)



Prepared by Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., CDE, Assistant Professor, Department of Human Nutrition. July 2003.

**Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, Manhattan, Kansas.**

Contents of this publication may be reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. For more information about healthy eating, contact your local extension office. Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider & employer. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. **The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-888-369-4777.** 6