

Oven Roasted Sweet Potato Fries



TIPS:

1. **Sweet Potatoes** or **Yams**? Sweet potatoes and actual yams are very different vegetables. In the United States, there are two primary varieties of sweet potatoes available: one, called a “sweet potato”, has a golden skin with yellow flesh and relatively dry, coarse texture; the other, traditionally called a “yam” originally by African-American slaves because of their similar appearance and texture to native African and Asian yams, has a burnt orange colored skin, bright orange flesh and a

moist, creamy texture. I used American grown “yams” (which are actually sweet potatoes) to make the recipe you see here.

2. The Cooking Technique Shown Here Works with Any Potatoes. Although this recipe was made with “yam” sweet potatoes, you can use the same technique shown here to make oven roasted fries using any kind of potato.

3. To Peel or Not to Peel the Potato Skin: I recommend **not** peeling the skins from the sweet potatoes. Not only is peeling an extra step, but more importantly, removing the skin significantly decreases the nutrient and fiber content found both in and right below the sweet potato skin.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Ingredients

(for 3-4 as side dish)

2 Sweet Potatoes

Cooking Spray

Salt

Ground Black Pepper

Garlic Powder (optional)

Favorite Spice Seasoning (optional)



Equipment

Large Sharp Knife
Cutting Board
Sponge with Abrasive Pad
Baking Pan
Spatula
Timer
Potholder or Folded Dishtowel



1. Place an oven rack half way up from the oven bottom, and preheat the oven to 450 degrees (230 degrees Celsius).



2. While the oven warms, prepare the **sweet potatoes**. Start by rinsing and scrubbing the

sweet potatoes clean either with an abrasive sponge to remove as much gritty dirt as possible (if you don't have an abrasive sponge, you can use your hands or a vegetable brush).



Cut the **pointed tips** from both ends of the **sweet potatoes**. Then carefully cut a 1/2 - 3/4 inch (15 - 20 mm) lengthwise slice from the **sweet potato** (making this cut to create a flat surface will stabilize the sweet potato for the next cuts you need to make).



Hold the **sweet potato** with the freshly cut flat side down on the cutting board and make lengthwise slices $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (15 - 20 mm) wide. If cutting the **slices** is difficult, first set the knife blade into the **sweet potato flesh**, then use the heel of your free hand to press down on the top, dull side of the knife to drive the knife blade through the **sweet potato** as shown in the picture on the right.



Cut each of the **slices** into **lengthwise strips** also $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (15 - 20 mm) wide and either leave the **strips** as is or cut them in half as shown in the picture on the right.



3. Spray a baking pan with a generous, even layer of **cooking spray** and put the **cut potatoes** onto the pan making sure to...



...spread the **sweet potato strips** evenly so that they do not overlap on the pan, preferably with the skin side down.



4. Shake on a **light dusting of salt**, a good crunch of **ground black pepper** and...



...your choice of **optional flavor toppings** like **garlic powder** and **spiced seasoning** (I'm using Cajun spices in the picture on the right).



Top the **sweet potatoes** with another generous, even coat of **cooking spray**.



5. When the oven warms to 450 degrees (230 degrees Celsius), put the baking pan in the oven and set a timer for 25 minutes.



6. When the timer sounds, check the **roasted sweet potato fries** for doneness by driving the tip of a sharp knife into the middle of one of the **largest sweet potato pieces** on the baking pan. The **sweet potato piece** should be soft throughout. If your **sweet potato fries** are not soft throughout, keep roasting and checking for doneness at 5-minute intervals.



7. When the **sweet potato fries** are cooked through, remove the baking pan from the oven with a potholder or folded dishtowel, and...



...serve the **freshly roasted sweet potato fries** warm.

