

How to Bake Pumpkin Seeds at Home

Bake Pumpkin Seeds with or without Using Oil

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As delicious as pumpkin seeds taste when you buy them from the store in a box or in a bag, they taste even more delicious when you bake them at home in your own hot oven! The way you bake pumpkin seeds yourself allows you to control how much salt you add as well as whether or not to use oil. Baking seeds yourself also allows for involving children in the preparation process.

When deciding to bake your own pumpkin seeds, the first thing to do is obtain a pumpkin from a pumpkin patch, a store, or your backyard if you grow pumpkins. If you want to turn your pumpkin into a jack-o-lantern, you can carve out the facial features prior to scooping out the seeds or you can create the face later. Whichever you choose, in order to remove the seeds from the pumpkin you must carve a hole around the stem so that you can remove that area. This allows you to put your hand or scooping utensil into the pumpkin in order to scoop out the seeds. Thus, once you have your pumpkin, you are ready to follow the easy seed baking steps below.

Step One

Use a sharp paring knife to cut out a section of pumpkin from around the stem area. Cut a hole that is large enough to allow your hand to fit into the pumpkin once the section is removed. Scooping with your hand is the easiest and most fun way to remove the seeds. If you would rather not use your hand for

scooping, however, you could use a spoon or other pumpkin scooping utensil. With that said, however, if children will be helping in the process, it is a good idea to let them reach into the pumpkin with their bare hands to get a feel of the pumpkin inners. Children often enjoy hand scooping pumpkin seeds because the pumpkin inners feel squishy and stringy between their fingers.

Step Two

Use two large to separate the pumpkin seeds from the flesh. Place the flesh in one bowl and the seeds in the other. After all seeds are removed and separated from the flesh, wash and drain the seeds. Once seeds are washed and drained, lay them in a pile atop a baking dish. Foil baking pans work great and you can use them without applying oil to prevent the seeds from sticking. However, if you prefer to add a lubricant, spray the pan with non-stick spray or use a basting brush to spread a thin coat of oil or margarine across the surface of the pan.

Step Three

Sprinkle salt over the seeds. Adults should be fine sprinkling salt straight from the saltbox; however, it might be best to let children use a saltshaker to sprinkle the salt. Children can control tiny holes in saltshakers better than they can control saltboxes with large pouring spouts.

Step Four

Stir pumpkin seeds about the pan with a large spoon so that salt spreads to all sides of the seeds. Sprinkle additional salt if you think the seeds need more and then spread the seeds across the pan. Spread the seeds until they do not touch one another, if possible.

Step Five

Bake pumpkin seeds at 325 degrees Fahrenheit for fifteen to twenty minutes. After the first ten minutes or so of baking time, move the seeds about the pan with a spatula in order to separate overlapping seeds and give all shells a chance to bake dry.

Step Six

Remove baked pumpkin seeds from the oven and allow them to cool for five or ten minutes. Then, slide the seeds into a bowl or onto a dish and enjoy your fresh pumpkin seed snack!