

What to do with a pumpkin after Halloween

seasonal cooking

From delicious pies and soups to toasted seeds...

Carving pumpkins at Halloween is a long-standing tradition and one which many people get involved in each year. But once the trick-or-treaters have gone home and the festivities are over, what should you do with your pumpkin after Halloween?

So once you've scooped out the contents of your pumpkin, what do you do with it?

Cook it

Pumpkins can be made into delicious **pies and soups** and they can also be **roasted, boiled, fried and mashed** to make perfect winter accompaniments to sausages, pies, stews and curries.

Simply cut the top off, scoop out the insides, peel it and decide what you want to make it into. Pumpkin also makes great mash, chips, and a great addition to the Sunday roast – and all of these cooking ideas apply to the wonderful assortment of squash too.

Why not try [chicken, thyme and pumpkin risotto](#)?

Pumpkin soup

An impressive way of serving soup is to buy two pumpkins; with the first, scoop out the seeds, peel it, cut the flesh up into cubes and turn it into pumpkin soup.

With the second, cut off the top and scoop out the seeds and leave to air-dry for a few hours, before either heating through in the oven or lining neatly with tin foil (make sure you continue the foil over the edges).

When the pumpkin soup is ready to serve, pour it into the pumpkin and place in the centre of the table for a dramatic Halloween starter or main.

Try this simple but delicious recipe for [spiced pumpkin soup](#)

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Toast the seeds

Instead of throwing away the seeds, separate them from the flesh and rinse them under cold water.

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil over a medium heat and add the seeds – turn the heat down and allow the seeds to simmer for 10 minutes.

Drain the seeds and place in a single layer in a baking tray along with oil of your choice (olive oil, vegetable oil and flavoured oils all work well).

Roast in a hot oven for 20 minutes, checking regularly to ensure that they don't burn. Remove from the oven and leave to cool completely before seasoning with salt and pepper and serving as a healthy Halloween snack or scattered over pumpkin soup.

Plant the seeds

Scoop out the seeds, rinse them, spread them out on a baking tray in a warm place and dry them out. After a few days, plant them in a pot with fertile soil and keep indoors until they start to sprout, plant them out into the garden or a bigger pot in the new year.

Disposing of your pumpkin

If you carved your pumpkin and used it as a traditional Jack O' Lantern over Halloween, you can still make sure it doesn't go to waste and you can learn to be even more environmentally friendly next year:

- Put it in your compost bin and allow it to decay and turn into **beautiful rich fertiliser** for your plants and flowers.
- Dig a hole for it in your garden and bury it. It won't grow or sprout other pumpkins, but it will **enrich your soil** and make it great for growing plants, vegetables and flowers.
- Leave it out for the birds for a few days and **let them eat what they want** of it before disposing of it in one of the above ways.

