

# Turnip

## Growing & Harvesting

**Grow.** Plant seeds in spring. Soil temperature can be as low as 40°F. Sow seeds ¼- to ½-inch deep, one inch apart, in rows 12-18 inches apart. Thin to 4-6 inch spacing. Plant in full sun and water 1-2 inches per week. For more growing information, visit [www.msueextension.org](http://www.msueextension.org) and look for the MontGuide, *Planting a Successful Home Vegetable Garden*, or contact your Extension office.

**Harvest.** Begin harvest when turnips are one inch in diameter or larger. Harvest can be late into the season as turnips can withstand several light freezes.

## Selection

Choose young, small bulbs: they are the most tender. Overgrown turnips are sharp in flavor and tough and woody in texture. They should feel firm and heavy with crisp green tops. Check for a sweet aroma. Turnips are generally white at the bottom with a light purple blush on the top of the bulb.



## Storage

Store turnips in a vegetable crisper where it is cool and moist for only a few days. Longer storage will make turnips bitter.

## Nutrition Information

Most vegetables are rich in fiber but provide negligible amounts of saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium and are gluten-free. Turnips have only 17 calories per half-cup serving and are rich in Vitamin C.

## Uses

**Bake.** Place whole turnips, halves or slices in a baking dish and cover. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes, or until tender.

**Boil or Steam.** Slice turnips into 1/2- to 1-inch pieces and place into steamer or pan of boiling water. Steam or boil about 15-20 minutes or until tender. Boil uncovered to allow the bitter gases to escape. After boiling or steaming, add turnips to casseroles or blend with potatoes.

**Microwave.** Cut turnips into quarters or one-inch pieces and place them in a microwaveable dish with two tablespoons of liquid. Cover with a lid or vented plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 4-6 minutes or until tender.

**Raw.** Cut smaller turnips into 1/4- to 1/2-inch slices and eat raw, or add to a salad, slaw or a vegetable tray.

**Roast.** Chop peeled turnips into quarters, place in plastic bag and shake with olive oil to coat. Spread coated turnips on a pan to roast at 425°F for 20-30 minutes, or until tender.

**Sauté.** Warm pan to medium to medium-high heat, add butter or oil to coat bottom of pan, then add diced 1/2- to 1-inch pieces of turnip. Stir turnips to produce even browning. Sauté about five minutes, or until tender.

**Season.** To enhance the flavor of turnips, use garlic, coriander, cumin, chili powder or cardamom.

**Preserve.** For more information on preserving turnips, look for MontGuides: *Freezing Vegetables*; *Drying Vegetables*. Visit [www.msueextension.org/nutrition](http://www.msueextension.org/nutrition) and click on the food preservation link or contact your Extension office.

### Food Safety Tips

1. **Clean.** Wash hands and food contact surfaces before and after preparation.
2. **Chill.** Keep produce and food cool and chill promptly.
3. **Separate.** Keep produce and food separate from raw meats and eggs.
4. **Cook.** Cook food to a safe temperature.

Questions? Click on [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

# Preparation: Step-by-Step



Wash hands. Rinse thoroughly in cold water to remove sand and dirt.



Cut off root and stem ends. Place turnip cut-side down and, if desired, slice off skin or use a vegetable peeler.



Firmly hold peeled turnip to slice to desired thickness.



Cut the slices into strips or dice to desired size.

## For More Information:

Montana State University Extension: [www.msuxextension.org](http://www.msuxextension.org)  
MSU Extension Master Gardener: [www.mtmastergardener.org](http://www.mtmastergardener.org)  
MSU Extension Food and Nutrition: [www.msuxextension.org/nutrition](http://www.msuxextension.org/nutrition)  
MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs: [www.buycatlivebetter.org](http://www.buycatlivebetter.org)

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## Information Courtesy of:

De Long, E. (2001). Guidelines for Harvesting Vegetables. Cornell Cooperative Extension. <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/harvestguide.pdf>  
Fruits & Veggies More Matters. (2012). Turnip: Nutrition. selection. storage. <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/turnip>  
University of Illinois Extension. (2013). Turnip/Rutabaga. *Watch Your Garden Grow*. <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/turnip.cfm>