

## Vegetarian (or Vegan) Potato Soup

1 ½ pounds of potatoes  
Enough water to cover potatoes in pot by ½ to 1 inch  
½ teaspoon of salt or more (to suit your individual taste)  
4 tablespoons of butter (optional)  
2 tablespoons of corn starch  
2 tablespoons of cold water  
Black pepper, if desired

Peel and rinse potatoes and cut them into small wedges. Put them in a pot, add enough water to cover the potatoes by ½ to 1 inch, and turn the heat on high. Add butter if desired. Once the potatoes start boiling, turn down the heat to between low heat and medium heat and cook them until they are tender – this usually takes about 7 minutes once the potatoes have started boiling. Stab one of the potatoes with a fork to determine if they are done – if the potato falls apart (and the color of the potato is dull), it is done.

While the potatoes are cooking, mix together the corn starch and cold water.

After the potatoes are finished cooking, and while they are boiling slowly, add the “slurry” of corn starch and water little by little, mixing the soup the entire time. Within a minute, the soup should be thicker. If you desire a thicker consistency than that, repeat this step, mixing together equal amounts cold water and corn starch, and then adding that to the soup.

At this point, add the salt and taste. If you desire more saltiness, add more salt, in no more than ½ teaspoon increments. Add black pepper to taste, as well, if desired.

This soup is a good base for other soups, as well.

For clam chowder, add fresh clams when you put the potatoes on to cook. You can also use canned clams. Two to three small cans of clams should suffice. Substitute some of the cooking water with the water from the clam cans. Saute ½ cup celery and ½ cup onion in butter until soft and add that at the beginning of the potato cooking process. You can also add black pepper at the end.

For loaded baked potato soup, simply add bacon bits, shredded cheese, and chopped chives once you have thickened and seasoned the soup. You can serve it with a dollop of sour cream on top.

For vegan potato soup, simply omit the butter.