

- Prep Time: 5 minutes
- Cook Time: 40–45 minutes
- Total Time: 45–50 minutes
- Servings: 4 potatoes
- Difficulty Level: Easy
- Cooking Method: Air Frying (Convection Heat)

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Cooking Intensities & Air Fryer Temperature Control

Understanding temperature intensities is critical for achieving optimal results in an air fryer.

Phase	Thermal Intensity	Air Fryer Temp	Duration	Primary Purpose
Preheat	High	400°F (200°C)	3-5 min	Establishes immediate surface heat to sear skin oil.
Initial Bake	Medium-High	400°F (200°C)	20 min	Initiates core cooking and softens interior starches.
Flip & Crisp	Medium-High	400°F (200°C)	20-25 min	Dehydrates outer skin layer, creating maximum crispness.

Equipment Required

- Air Fryer (Basket or Oven style)
- Tongs
- Fork or paring knife
- Small bowl or pastry brush
- Paper towels

Ingredients

- 4 Medium Russet Potatoes (approx. 8-10 oz / 225-280g each), scrubbed clean and dried thoroughly
- 1.5 tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil (or avocado oil / melted butter)
- 1.5 tsp Coarse Sea Salt or Kosher Salt (coarse grains add necessary crunch)
- 1/2 tsp Freshly Cracked Black Pepper
- 1/2 tsp Garlic Powder (optional, for extra flavor)

Optional Classic Topping Ideas:

- Unsalted butter, softened
- Full-fat sour cream or Greek yogurt
- Freshly chopped chives or sliced green onions
- Crispy bacon bits
- Shredded cheddar cheese

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Selection and Washing

Select medium Russet potatoes that are uniform in size to ensure even cooking. Wash thoroughly under cold running water to remove dirt. Crucial step: Pat the potatoes completely dry with paper towels. Excess water on the skin turns to steam in the air fryer, preventing the oil from adhering properly and leaving the skin soggy rather than crisp.

Step 2: Piercing

Using a sharp fork or paring knife, pierce each potato 6 to 8 times all over. Piercing creates tiny steam vents that release internal pressure as the moisture inside boils. Skipping this step can cause the potato skin to burst under pressure inside the basket.

Step 3: Oil and Season

Place the dried potatoes in a large bowl or on a clean work surface. Drizzle with 1.5 tablespoons of olive oil. Rub the oil evenly over every inch of the skins using your hands. Generously sprinkle coarse sea salt, black pepper, and garlic powder over the oiled potatoes. Ensure the salt adheres evenly to the entire oiled surface.

Step 4: Preheat the Air Fryer

Set your air fryer to 400°F (200°C) on the Air Fry / High Intensity setting and allow it to preheat for 3 to 5 minutes. Starting with a preheated chamber ensures immediate searing of the outer skin.

Step 5: Initial Bake (20 Minutes)

Place the seasoned potatoes into the preheated air fryer basket in a single layer. Ensure there is at least a half-inch space between each potato to allow hot air to circulate freely around the entire surface. Slide the basket in and cook at 400°F (200°C) for 20 minutes.

Step 6: Flip and Finish (20-25 Minutes)

Open the air fryer basket after 20 minutes. Using tongs, carefully flip each potato over to promote even browning. Resume cooking at 400°F (200°C) for another 20 to 25 minutes.

To test for doneness, insert a fork or sharp paring knife into the thickest part of the potato. It should slide into the center effortlessly with zero resistance. If you feel firmness, close the basket and cook for an additional 5 minutes.

Step 7: Slice and Fluff

Remove the potatoes from the air fryer and allow them to rest for 2 to 3 minutes until safe to handle. Slice open each potato lengthwise down the center with a knife. Using a paper towel to protect your hands, gently pinch both ends of the potato toward the center to pop the fluffy interior open. Fluff the interior flesh with a fork before adding your favorite toppings.

Key Tips for Air Fryer Potato Success

- **Why Russet Potatoes?** Russets feature high starch and low moisture content, making them the superior choice for baking. Waxier potatoes (like Red or Yukon Gold) will hold together and yield a dense, heavy texture rather than a light, fluffy center.
- **Do Not Wrap in Foil!** Wrapping potatoes in aluminum foil traps steam against the skin. While this cooks the interior, it leaves the skin wet and soft. Air frying uncovered allows the skin to dehydrate into a crackly shell.
- **Keep Spacing Even:** Overcrowding the basket blocks the air fryer's convection current. If your basket is small, cook in batches rather than stacking the potatoes.

Nutritional Information

The following values are estimated per serving (1 medium baked potato with skin, cooked with oil and salt, excluding extra toppings).

- Calories: 215 kcal
- Total Fat: 5.2 g
 - Saturated Fat: 0.7 g
 - Trans Fat: 0.0 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg
- Sodium: 870 mg (Adjustable based on added salt)
- Total Carbohydrates: 37.0 g
 - Dietary Fiber: 4.0 g
 - Sugars: 1.5 g
- Protein: 4.5 g

- Vitamin C: ~28% DV
- Potassium: ~890 mg (25% DV)
- Calcium: ~26 mg
- Iron: ~1.8 mg