

# HOW TO GROW SWEET POTATOES



Sweet potatoes are root vegetables. They are healthy for us to eat. Sweet potatoes give us energy. They are also high in vitamins and minerals.

Sweet potatoes come in many colours. They can be orange, purple, white, or even red! It is easy to grow sweet potatoes! Let's find out how.

## MATERIALS

- one organic sweet potato
- two clear cups and one disposable cup
- scissors
- eight toothpicks
- water
- large flowerpot and potting soil or a summer garden bed



**STEP 1** Find a medium-sized sweet potato. It should have firm skin and no soft spots. Organic sweet potatoes are best. Some potatoes have been washed in chemicals. These potatoes will not grow.



**STEP 2** Wash your sweet potato. Do not rub it. Look for small dents in the potato. That's where it will grow!



**STEP 3** Cut your sweet potato in half. Push one toothpick into the side of the potato.

Push another toothpick into the other side. Keep going. You need four toothpicks in each piece of potato!



**STEP 4** Fill the cups with water. Place the sweet potato halves in the cups. The toothpicks should rest on the cup rims. Part of the potato will be inside the cup. Part of it will sit above the rim. Make sure your potato sits in the water.



**STEP 5** Put the cups in a sunny indoor spot. Soon your sweet potato will start growing! It may grow leaves. It may also grow roots.



**STEP 6** When the shoots are about 10cm long, gently twist them off the potato. These cuttings will form new plants. One potato can give you many new plants!



**STEP 7** Your cuttings need to grow longer roots. Make a water dish for them. Cut off the bottom of a disposable cup. Fill the dish with water. Put the bottoms of the cuttings into the water. Soon they will grow roots.



**STEP 8** Wait until the roots are a few centimetres long. Now you can plant your cuttings! The soil should be 25cm deep. Dig the soil well to loosen it. Potatoes will grow in a big pot or the ground. They need warm weather to grow well. In colder countries they are grown in greenhouses.



**STEP 9** Plant your cuttings in the soil. Cover the roots. Gently pat the soil down. The cuttings should stand up straight.



**STEP 10** Give your plants lots of sunshine and water! When the leaves turn yellow the potatoes are ready. The sweet potatoes are under the ground. They are the roots of the plant! Dig them up and keep them in a warm spot. After 10 days they will be ready to eat!

### DID YOU KNOW?

In Africa sweet potatoes are a staple food. This means that people eat them very often.

In South America they use sweet potato juice to dye cloth.