

Pumpkin

(Cucurbita pepo)

Recommended Varieties

- Spirit (semi-bush, multipurpose)
- Autumn Gold (multipurpose, turns gold prior to maturity)
- Jack O'Lantern (good for carving)
- Big Max (large fruit for showing)
- Bushkin (compact vine for large container or garden)

Disease Resistance

- AAS
- AAS

Pumpkins can range in size from small jack-o'-lanterns to more than 100 pounds depending on the variety grown. Pumpkins need ample space. The bush types can spread to more than 20 feet. Check Table 2 for the best planting dates in your area. Give pumpkin the same care and treatment as described for winter squash. Keep leaves dry to prevent wilt diseases.

To monogram a jack-o'-lantern, scratch a name into the fruit before the shell is hardened (usually in late August or early September). The inscription will callus over and become more distinguishable as the pumpkin matures.

Nutritional Value of Pumpkin

<p>Serving size: ½ cup, (can)</p> <p>Calories 41</p> <p>Fat 0.3 g</p> <p>Calories from fat 7%</p> <p>Cholesterol 0</p> <p>Sodium 6 mg</p> <p>Protein 1.3 g</p> <p>Carbohydrate 9.9 g</p>	<p><u>Primary Nutrients</u></p> <p>Vitamin A 2,691RE</p> <p>Iron 1.7 mg</p> <p>Vitamin C 5 mg</p> <p>Folic Acid 15 mcg</p> <p>Magnesium 28 mg</p> <p>Potassium 251 mg</p>	<p><u>%RDA(m)</u></p> <p>269</p> <p>17</p> <p>8</p> <p>7.5</p> <p>8</p> <p><u>% Min Requirement</u></p> <p>12.5</p>	<p><u>%RDA(f)</u></p> <p>336</p> <p>11</p> <p>8</p> <p>8</p> <p>10</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------

Problem Diagnosis for Pumpkin

What the Problem Looks Like	Probable Cause	Comments
Deformed, curled leaves. Small, soft-bodied insects on undersides of leaves. Sticky honeydew or black, sooty mold may be present.	Aphids	Use insecticidal soap.
Fine stippling on leaves. Yellow or brown leaves. Leaf undersides are silver-gray with fine webbing and yellow, orange, or red dots.	Spider mites	Use oil or soap spray.
Leaves turn yellow. Honeydew or sooty mold present. Clouds of tiny white insects fly up when plant is disturbed.	Whiteflies	Remove infested plants as quickly as possible. Remove lower, infested leaves of plants not totally infested.
Coarse, white stippling on upper surface of leaves. Leaves may turn brown.	Leafhoppers	
Blotches or tunnels on leaves	Leafminers	
Angular necrotic areas on leaves	Angular leaf spot (caused by bacterium that spreads in water)	Avoid wetting foliage with irrigation water.
Swelling, beads on roots. Wilted plants. Poor yields.	Nematodes	Rotate crops. Use soil solarization techniques.
Holes chewed in leaves. Scarring of runners, young fruit. Wilting. Beetles visible.	Cucumber beetles (Beetles are yellow-green with black stripes or spots.)	Use pyrethrins.

Problem Diagnosis for Pumpkin (continued)

What the Problem Looks Like	Probable Cause	Comments
Leaves have small specks that turn yellow, then brown. Vines wilt from point of attack to end of vine.	Squash bug	Trap adults beneath boards in spring. Turn over boards in a.m. and kill. bugs. Pick off adults, young, egg masses.
White, powdery spots on leaves and stems. Spots may enlarge and completely cover leaf. Defoliation may occur. Yields reduced.	Powdery mildew (Spores of powdery mildew fungus are spread by wind and air currents.)	Disease is less severe in hot, dry weather. Use resistant varieties. Dusting with sulfur can be effective. Remove old plant debris.
Yellow spots on upper leaf surfaces. Grayish, fuzzy growth on undersides of spots.	Downy mildew (caused by fungus disease)	Use resistant varieties. Remove old plant debris.
Stunted plants, small leaves with irregularly shaped light and dark spots (mottled). Yields reduced	Mosaic virus (transmitted by aphids)	Remove infected plants as soon as detected. Control aphids. Control weeds. Aluminum foil is effective as soil mulch to reduce infection. Deformed fruit is edible.
Poor fruit set	Insufficient pollination Lack of bee pollinators	Hand-pollinate using artist's paintbrush if you have too few bee pollinators. Bee activity may be low due to cool weather or insecticides.

Problem Diagnosis for Pumpkin (continued)

What the Problem Looks Like	Probable Cause	Comments
Plants wilt and die, beginning with older crown leaves. Light brown streaks occur inside lower stem, runners and root. Visible when split lengthwise.	Verticillium wilt (caused by <i>Verticillium</i> fungus)	Rotate. Avoid soil previously planted in potatoes, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and cucurbits.
Plants wilt suddenly. Roots rot.	Sudden wilt (Caused by <i>Pythium fungus</i>)	Avoid water stress after fruit set. Avoid wetting soil to the crown. Improve drainage. Plant on raised beds.
Water-soaked, sunken, brown or black spot on fruit not restricted to blossom end	Belly rot	Rotate crops. Improve drainage. Stake or cage to keep fruit off ground.
Excessive vegetative growth	Planting too close together	Increase plant spacing.

Note: Pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo* var. *pepo*) is a relative of melons (*Cucumis melo*) cantaloupe, honeydew, crenshaw - , winter and summer squash (*Cucurbita pepo* var. *melo*pepo), cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*), and watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*). Collectively, known as the cucurbits, they suffer from similar pests and diseases, evident from the problem diagnosis table above.