

Guide to Steaming Vegetables

Try steaming - you don't have to add fat to cook, it takes about half as long so more nutrients are retained, and it's simple! Almost any vegetable can be steamed; firm ones like potatoes and carrots take the longest, softer ones take less time, and leafy greens are quick. I favor a rice-vegetable steamer; you can collect juices in its drip pan for broths or to cook grains. For a bamboo or expanding metal steamer insert for a stainless steel or nonstick pot (acidity of some vegetables can react with aluminum and tin), be sure the vegetables sit an inch or so above the water. Some people use the microwave with a steaming appliance, or by sandwiching a layer of vegetables with two paper towels and cooking on high in 2m increments till they're done. You don't have to steam with just water; try adding a little lemon juice, wine, or a fresh herb sprig, or use broth instead. Try lime juice, herbs, or other topping when you serve the vegetables. Use this chart as a guide, but generally steam uniform bite-sized chunks of vegetables till just crisp. Time varies with size; larger pieces take more time.

Fresh Vegetable	Minutes to Steam	Yield Guide	Tips
Beans - Green/Wax	15-18	(1 pound) 4 cups	Stir after 10m
Beans - Lima	25-35		
Beans - Snap	20-35		
Broccoli spears	13-15	(1 pound) 4 cups	If florets, steam for 5-8m
Corn on the cob	20		
Asparagus	3-5 up to ½" diameter		First remove tough lower portions of spears; if more than ½" diam, 5-10m
Artichoke	35-40		First wash thoroughly or soak for 5-10 mins.; serve with a margarine-lime-rosemary-onion dipping sauce
Brussel Sprouts	15-20	(1 pound) 3.5 cups	Cut a shallow "X" onto stems first
Leafy greens (e.g., mustard, kale, spinach, broccoli rabe, escarole)	3-5 (till just wilted)		Rinse, remove stems, tear into bite-sized pieces; bright green when done; spinach may take only a minute
Potatoes	30-35		Cut in half with cut side down
Carrots	16-19	(1 pound) 2.5 cups	Slice into ¼" wide discs or add 5m cook time; stir after 10m
Snow Peas	10	(½ pound) 2 cups	Break off ends, remove strings; stir after 7m
Cabbage	20-23		Trim outer leaves then cut into quarters; if shredded instead, 8-12m
Cauliflower head (med.)	18-20		Remove core first
Cauliflower florets	20-25		Cut each to 2" diam.; stir after 15m
Summer Squash (e.g., yellow, zucchini)	15	(1 pound) 3 cups	Cut into ¼" slices; stir after 9m
Acorn squash	30-35		Medium, 1 ¼ pound squash, halved
Turnips	15		Peel, cut into ¼" slices
Beets	30-40		
Bean sprouts	3		Sprouts will puff up
Frozen Cut Corn (16 oz bag)	13-15		Stir after 10m
Frozen Peas (16 oz)	15		Stir after 10m
Frozen Green Beans (16 oz)	22-24		Stir after 15m
Frozen Broccoli Cuts (16 oz)	20		Stir after 15m
Frozen Spinach (whl lf) (20 oz)	25		Separate with fork and stir after 20m
Frozen Asparagus spears(20 oz)	20-23		Separate with fork after 10 and 15m
Frozen Cauliflower (20 oz)	18-20		Stir after 10m
Frozen Mixed Vegetables (28 oz)	23-25		Stir after 15 and 20m