

## Julienne Fries

August 12 is National Julienne Fries Day. What are julienne fries? In case you didn't know, julienne is a cutting technique that creates thin strips about 1/8 x 1/8 x 2-inches, also called matchsticks. The rational reason to julienne a potato would be to make French fries. Knowing how to do a julienne cut will be useful in many recipes and is a fundamental kitchen skill. Especially when making homemade fries, you will love the crispiness of the thin-cut julienned fries.

With all the varieties of potatoes out there, it can get confusing to know which ones make the best fries. High-starch potatoes are the ones to seek out, and those are generally Russets, also called Idaho baking potatoes.

### How-To Julienne Cut Potatoes

- Peel the potato, if necessary.
- The first cut is designed to make the potato easier to cut. Since a potato is round, the first step is to slice off one side of the potato, so it is flat on one side.
- Place the potato on the cutting board with the flat side down to make it easier to cut. Then, slice a small amount from each side of the potato so that it has a long, rectangular shape.
- It is important to determine how thick your strips will be and to make each cut the same size to form uniform pieces. Cut thin slices from the potato; each slice should be about 1/8-inch thick or your desired thickness.
- Lay out or stack the slices on the cutting board. If the slices are too long, cut them crosswise to make them shorter. Slice through the potatoes sections lengthwise, and make sure to keep your cuts uniform in your desired thickness.
- Once you have cut all of the pieces into thin strips, you have julienned potatoes. A potato is an affordable vegetable to practice your knife skills on and will make delicious homemade fries even if your cuts aren't perfect!

If you don't want to use a knife, you could also cut the potatoes quickly and uniformly using a mandolin with a julienne blade. If you need to slice a lot of vegetables, a mandoline can come in handy. Mandoline slicers are a kitchen utensil used for finely slicing and grating foods. They make quick work, and I mean quick work, of cutting all kinds of food to even and precise slices. The mandoline blade is very sharp. Many mandolines are sold with safety measures already put into place to prevent you from accidentally cutting yourself while using one, such as a guard placed over the food and blade itself. I also recommend using cut-resistant gloves.

Ironically, the French may not have invented French fries. We know they perfected the cooking technique of deep-fat frying foods, but it is believed that Belgians are responsible for creating the fried potato dish we call French fries. In Europe, they are called frites.

French fries may not be the healthiest food, but most people enjoy them on occasion. One way to make them healthier is to use sweet potatoes instead of regular potatoes. A healthier way to cook them is to oven fry them instead of deep-fat frying. Try this recipe, made in the oven and with olive oil, which is a healthier fat.

### **Baked Matchstick French Fries**

Recipe from <https://www.urbancookery.com/baked-matchstick-french-fries/>

#### **Ingredients:**

2 potatoes  
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil  
Salt  
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika

#### **Instructions:**

Preheat your oven to 400°F.

Scrub the outsides of your potatoes.

Square off your potato by cutting the 4 long sides of the potato (making the potato look more like a rectangular block). You don't need to cut the ends, unless desired.

From the rectangle, cut 1/4-inch thick slabs so that you have 1/4-inch thick rectangles.

From there, julienne each of the slabs into matchstick fries that are 1/4-inch thick all around.

Put the fries in a large bowl. Add in the olive oil, and toss together to coat all the fries in oil.

Lay the french fries on a resting rack and place them on a baking sheet. Evenly top with salt and smoked paprika.

Bake fries in the oven for 35 minutes. Turn the oven up to Hi Broil and cook another 3-5 minutes, or until slightly crispy. Serve hot.

<https://www.thedailymeal.com/cook/how-julienne-potato>

<https://www.noreciperequired.com/technique/how-julienne-potatoes>

<https://www.kitchenproject.com/history/Potatoes/FrenchFries/index.htm>