

## **Nutrition In A Nutshell: Pecans**

Pecans make a convenient and nutritious snack. Pecans aren't just an ingredient for cooking and baking. Families across the nation are wisely adding this nutritious, American-grown nut to their snacking rotation.

Like most nuts, pecans are available shelled and unshelled. Shelled pecans come as halves or pieces, raw or roasted, and salted or unsalted. You can also find glazed and flavored varieties of pecans in bags, single-serve pouches, and resealable canisters. Additionally, you can purchase a variety of pecan-based products, such as pecan oil, pecan butter, pecan milk, and pecan meal.

When buying packaged shelled pecans, look for a freshness date on the label. Look for pecans that are plump, uniform in color and size. Pecans with a faded, wrinkly appearance have usually been sitting on the shelf for too long.

When it comes to pecans and keeping them fresh, the thing to remember is that they are like most produce items. They must be kept at cool temperatures. At the very least, you should keep them in the refrigerator. But I personally recommend that you store pecan nuts in the freezer. In fact, if you follow these two guidelines, then your pecans will last four times as long or more.

Store pecan nuts in the refrigerator. Pecans will last for at least six months if stored in the refrigerator. Make sure they are in a zip lock bag and that you store them in the coolest part of your refrigerator.

Store pecan nuts in the freezer. Pecans can last for two years if stored in the freezer. I suggest storing them in zip lock bags. Just simply take one pound out at time and let them thaw before you use them for baking or eating.

Pecans can be thawed and refrozen repeatedly during the two-year freezing period without loss of flavor or texture. After removal from cold storage, pecans will stay good for an additional two months. In-shell pecans can be stored in a cool, dry place for six to 12 months.

Shelled pecans can be purchased in a variety of sizes, including halves and pieces. The pecans themselves vary in size, length, and color depending on the variety. Whole and half pecans are much more expensive than pieces, so when using chopped pecans in a recipe, buy the pieces to save money.

When it comes to overall health, one major category should always be at the forefront, nutrition. Having a well-balanced diet is an integral stepping stone in leading a long, healthy life. One of the best ways to maintain your energy levels, satisfy your appetite, and contribute to your overall health is by incorporating more nutritious snacks such as nuts.

Let's take a deeper dive into pecan nutrition. The pecan nut contains over nineteen vitamins and minerals. They are also a great source of natural fats, proteins, and fiber. The list of positive gains from eating pecans is enough to get anyone interested in a daily handful of these tasty morsels.

Knowing measurement equivalents will make using this tasty nut in recipes a cinch. One pound of pecans in their shells is 3 cups shelled. One pound shelled pecans equals 4 cups and 1 cup of pecan halves equals 3/4 cup chopped.

Pecans are a delicious, nutritious, and convenient snack to enjoy at any time of day. If you're looking to add healthy fats, fiber, vitamins, and minerals to your diet, consider pecans. They are the perfect choice for a between-meal snack and are an excellent addition to your breakfast, lunch, or dinner menu.

(Sources: [americanpecan.com](http://americanpecan.com); [ilovepecans.org](http://ilovepecans.org); [usda.gov](http://usda.gov))