



American Fries



Ingredients:

- 3 ½ pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into ¾-inch dice
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces
- Kosher salt and pepper
- Pinch cayenne pepper
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 onions, cut into ½-inch dice
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh chives

Method:

1. Adjust oven rack to lowest position, and then place a rimmed baking sheet on the rack, and heat oven to 500°F.
2. Bring 10 cups water to a boil in a Dutch oven over high heat. Add potatoes and baking soda. Return to boil and cook for 1 minute. Drain potatoes. Return potatoes to Dutch oven and place over low heat. Cook, shaking pot occasionally, until any surface moisture has evaporated, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Add butter, 1 ½ teaspoons salt, and cayenne; mix with rubber spatula until potatoes are coated with thick, starchy paste, about 30 seconds.
3. Remove baking sheet from oven and drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil. Transfer potatoes to baking sheet and spread into even layer. Roast for 15 minutes. While potatoes roast, combine onions, remaining 1-tablespoon oil, and ½ teaspoon salt in bowl.
4. Remove baking sheet from oven. Using thin, sharp metal spatula, scrape and turn potatoes. Clear about 8 by 5-inch space in center of baking sheet and add onion mixture. Roast for 15 minutes.
5. Scrape and turn again, mixing onions into potatoes. Continue to roast until potatoes are well browned and onions are softened and beginning to brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in chives and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.
6. Making home fries the traditional way takes about an hour of standing over a hot skillet, after which you get only three servings at most. We wanted a quicker, more hands-off method for making a larger amount. To speed things up, we developed a hybrid cooking technique: First, we parboil diced russet potatoes, and then we coat them in oil and cook them in a very hot oven. We discovered that boiling the potatoes with baking soda quickly breaks down their exterior while leaving their insides nearly raw, ensuring home fries with a crisp, brown crust and a moist, fluffy interior. We added diced onions in the last 20 minutes of oven time and finished the home fries with chives to reinforce the onion flavor.