

Pumpkins, Mazes and More

Celebrate autumn's harvest season with a trip to your local pumpkin patch or corn maze. Missoula boasts it's very own [corn maze](#). The Missoula Maze promises family fun as well as an amazing way to "get lost!" Sponsored by Earl Ellingson, 10% of proceeds go to local charities. The remaining funds go to building a bigger and better maze each year.

The compound includes a giant maze and a smaller one for toddlers PLUS a petting zoo, which includes among its many friendly four-legged creatures: **Fizzy**, the patient pony; **Petunia**, a miniature donkey; **Gabby** the turkey; **Florence**, a goat; and her two 3-week-old kids, **Darby** and **Dillon**.

Families that play together, stay together! Load your vehicle with friends and family this fall and do something fantastically fun and health laden. Take time to [go "pumpkin hunting" in your favorite patch](#) or grocery store and then bake a pie or carve your special find together.



Choosing Your Pumpkin

To Make a Pumpkin Pie:

Pick a small, sweet type of pumpkin that has been developed for eating, about 8" to 10" diameter. The inside is much less stringy and smoother than a decorative pumpkin variety. Pumpkin is rich in vitamin A and potassium. One cup of cooked pumpkin contains only 81 calories. While rich in fiber, pumpkin is low in sodium and has no saturated fat! Look for one that is firm, no soft spots or signs of any rot.



[Low Calorie Pumpkin Pie Recipe](#) (<100 cal/slice).

Tip: If you like roasted or baked pumpkin seeds, you can wash the seeds from your pumpkin and "bake", season and enjoy a healthy toasted snack.



Decorate a Pumpkin:

1. Odd shapes can be part of your design!
2. To prevent rot, the flesh should feel hard, not give easily and be free from cuts, soft spots, bruises
3. The stem makes a hat
4. Cure a fresh-picked pumpkin by keeping it in a dry place. Curing toughens the rind, making it less prone to rot. Pumpkins will keep for months in a cool (50 F to 65F) dry, low humidity place; such as a cool, dry basement.

Simple Steps to Make Carved Pumpkins Last:

1. Remove dirt: Wipe the exterior surfaces of the pumpkin clean using a damp cloth.
2. Sterilize the pumpkin's carved surfaces (to kill fungi, mold, bacteria, bugs) Make a bleach solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach (typical brand name "Clorox") per quart of water and put it in a spray bottle.
3. Keep your pumpkin out of direct sunlight and try to keep it as cool as possible (but above freezing!) and you should get at least a week's enjoyment out of it!