

DO
**CURE PUMPKINS
BEFORE STORING**

Curing, when the rind hardens, fruit wounds heal & immature fruit ripens, can be done in the field prior to harvesting.

DO
**HARVEST BEFORE
A HARD FREEZE**

Leaving the fruit in the field when temperatures drop below 27 degrees F will result in an 80-90% loss of the fruit.

DO
**LEAVE A
3-6" STEM**

Broken or damaged stems have a greater chance of being attacked by fruit rot pathogens, which will reduce the shelf life.

DO
**WASH AND DRY
BEFORE STORING**

Using soapy water that is 1 part chlorine to 10 parts of water will help remove excess soil and kill existing pathogens.

DO
**STORE IN A COOL,
DARK, DRY SPACE**

Store at 50-55 F with 50-70% relative humidity. High humidity encourages decay. Lower humidity causes excessive weight loss.

DO
**CHECK STORED
PUMPKINS OFTEN**

Discard any that are showing signs of decay. Pumpkins can be stored between two and three months.

DON'T
**HARVEST AFTER
A HEAVY RAIN**

This is a great rule of thumb to follow when harvesting any vegetables.

DON'T
**DROP OR BRUISE
THE PUMPKINS**

Damaged tissues can breed bacterial growth, which will shorten the life span of the pumpkin.

DON'T
**DAMAGE THE VINE
DURING HARVEST**

Use a sharp knife to cut the pumpkin from the vine. Vine damage can have detrimental results to the plant itself.

DON'T
**STORE DIRECTLY
ON BARE GROUND**

If you have to store on a cement floor or ground, put cardboard underneath to avoid rotting the bottom of the fruit.

DON'T
**STACK PUMPKINS
ON EACH OTHER**

Be sure to store your pumpkins in a single layer to prevent damage and spread of decay.

DON'T
**STORE PUMPKINS
WITH APPLES**

Apples give off ethylene which will hasten the ripening process of the pumpkins, reducing shelf life.



HARVESTING AND STORAGE OF

P₂ U₃ M₂ P₂ K₂ I₁ N₁

ILLINOIS
Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES