

Topping With Mashed Potato

Introduction

Many main meals are topped with mashed potato, to be frozen and then reheated in a conventional oven. This would include Cottage Pie, Fish Pie, Shepherd's Pie or even many of the casseroles so you can present a whole meal in a single dish.

The conventional oven gives us a browned and slightly crunchy potato top to the dish.

How Much Potato Do We Need?

First thing to know is your portion size. Your numbers may vary from mine, but you will not be different by much!

I present the dishes in small foil trays (No. 2 – 144mm) and aim for about 150g of mashed potato per portion.

I use an ice-cream scoop that holds about 70g of potato so I am aiming for 2 scoops of mash per portion.

We now need to consider that the weight of the potato before peeling is much more than the weight once it is peeled. The problem is knowing how much different that is!

You can gradually add your peeled potatoes on top of your scales to see how much you have. Or you can calculate (estimate) how much you need.

Estimate the Potato Needed

I use a traditional potato peeler as it takes least waste. I get about a 15% loss, unless the potatoes are very old or have many bad spots.

I will work on the basis that you get 25% waste. That may leave you with a bit extra but you can eat that on the fly, or use to make tattie scones!

Portions	Mashed	Unpeeled
1	150g	200g
4	600g	800g
5	750g	1kg
6	900g	1.20kg
10	1.5kg	2kg

How much potato to buy for the portions needed

Preparing the Potato

Follow the process for making mashed potato. You will find that in the section titled as Sides, Sauces and Accompaniments.

Allow the potato to cool slightly, but not very cold as this makes it much harder to work.

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Make sure the meat is lightly pressed into the tray bottom and corners with a fork. You want it mostly flat – certainly with no large humps!

Make sure the meat is cool before adding potato.

Add two ice-cream scoops of mashed potato to the top and use two forks to spread it.

Keep the potato below the lower rim of the foil tray so we can fit the lid.

Once the potato has been spread, run the fork lightly over the top to create little ridges.

You are now ready to fit the lid, label and chill before freezing.

Of course, you don't need to freeze – you can reheat as fresh but you should keep the meals chilled in the fridge and consume within 24 hours.



This will be reheated in a conventional oven with the lid off to give a browned and crunchy top.

If you are making this for yourself or for someone with the ability to finish the preparation, you may want to sprinkle some natural breadcrumbs or grated cheese over the potato before placing it in the oven.