Onions belong to the allium family and are close relatives of scallions, shallots, garlic, and leeks. They are considered a staple in almost any regional cooking.

There are many types of onions available in the market. They can be grouped as storage onions including red & yellow globe, Spanish, white, cipolline and pearl onions. Or they can be sold as spring/summer onions, such as scallions, which are considered “sweet” and are much more perishable than storage onions.

Onions range in pungency from very sweet and mild to very strong. The same type of onion that is grown in a different location can vary considerably in pungency. Freshly harvested onions will have a much stronger flavor than those that have mellowed with time.

To avoid watery eyes when chopping large amounts of pungent onions, refrigerate the onions prior to cutting or cut them under running water.

**Storage Tips**

Bulb onions can be stored in a cool, dry place for several months. Once cut, onions should be stored in the refrigerator in an air-tight container to prevent their strong aroma from getting into other foods.

Green onions or scallions should be wrapped in a moist paper towel or plastic bag and stored in the vegetable crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

**Cooking Tips**

Use onions as a flavor enhancer in soups, stews, casseroles, and pasta. The longer you cook onions, the milder they become.

**Uses**

- Toss with Mexican seasonings and a little olive oil and grill
- Thread onto skewers with other vegetables and meat or seafood for shish kebabs
- Cook until caramelized and serve with pasta or over meat
- Add to bread dough or cornbread batter