



Bananas are native to tropical southeastern Asia but are widely cultivated in tropical regions. In popular culture and commerce, "banana" usually refers to the soft, sweet "dessert" bananas that are usually eaten raw. The bananas from a group of cultivars with firmer, starchier fruit, generally used in cooking rather than eaten raw, are typically known as plantains. Bananas may also be dried and ground into banana flour.

The main or upright growth is called a pseudostem. Each pseudostem produces a single bunch of bananas. Bananas are classified either as dessert bananas (meaning they are yellow and fully ripe when eaten) or as green cooking bananas.