

Pressure Canning Basics

A pressure canner is a special, large capacity appliance that uses pressure to achieve high temperatures. These temperatures exceed the boiling point and are necessary to safely process foods through canning.

This method of canning is the only safe method for canning low-acid foods – vegetables, meats, beans, and poultry. It can also be used for high acid fruits with lower pressure when you follow the instructions in the guide. The canner can also be used as a cooker to prepare foods in 1/3 to 1/10 the time required by conventional methods.

For your safety: It is important to become familiar with the features of your canner. Take proper care of it and replace parts as necessary. The following safety rules will prevent canning accidents in your kitchen.

- Read all instructions in your owner's manual
- When using canner for cooking, do not fill over 2/3 full. For foods that expand during cooking, do not fill over 1/2 full.
- Do not cook applesauce, cranberries, rhubarb, pearl barley, oatmeal or other cereals, split peas, or foods such as noodles, macaroni or spaghetti. These foods tend to foam, froth and sputter and may block your vent pipe
- Do not open Pressure canner until pressure has been reduced, air vent/cover lock has dropped and pressure regulator has been removed.
- Replace overpressure plug every time you replace the sealing ring. These items should be replaced every 2 years.
- If the air/vent cover lock has not dropped, there is still pressure in the canner. Do not remove the regulator until the air vent/cover lock drops and no steam escapes when the regulator is tilted.
- ALWAYS check the vent pipe before use. Hold cover up to light and look through vent pipe to be certain it is open
- Do not use the canner for pressure frying with oil

General Instructions: (refer to your canner's user manual for specific instructions)

- Before first use, clean according to your manufacturer's instructions
- **Before each use:** make sure the vent pipe is open by holding it up to the light and looking through the vent pipe
- The correct canning pressure is indicated on pressure gauge. (Test your pressure gauge periodically at the county extension office for accuracy)
- A pressure regulator is set on the vent pipe to maintain appropriate pressure. Some canners have more than one regular for different pounds of pressure. If you receive only one regulator, it is set for 15 pounds pressure. The pressure regulator will rock when this pressure is reached

- Use the canner on a level burner or range only
- Do not pour water into a dry overheated canner. The metal may crack
- Follow instructions to secure the lid in place, to prevent steam from escaping

Step by Step Instructions:

- Fill jars with food product. (Use only Mason jars, mayonnaise jars are weaker and may not stand up to the high pressure – mason jars that have been stored for several years without exposure to liquid also weaken over time and may crack in the canner)
- Heat lids as recommended by manufacturer.
- Wipe rims of bottles clean, place lid and ring on jar.
- Place jars in canner, on the canning rack. **Never place jars directly on bottom of canner.** You may want to pre-pack your canner to determine how many jars will fit. (You cannot put as many wide mouth jars in your canner as regular mouth jars)
- Pour three quarts of boiling water over jars in canner. (Use boiling water to shorten the time it takes to get your canner up to the correct pressure)
- Look through the vent pipe to make sure it is open and place cover on canner
- Heat canner on high setting. Watch for steam to escape from the vent pipe. Allow steam to flow for 10 minutes before putting on the pressure regulator. *This is an important step to insure that the pressure gauge reading is accurate.*
- Continue to heat canner until appropriate pressure is reached. Processing time begins once the appropriate pressure has been reached. Adjust temperature on range as needed to maintain appropriate pressure.
- DO NOT LEAVE CANNER UNATTENDED DURING PROCESSING
- At the end of processing time, turn burner to off position. Allow pressure to drop on its own. DO NOT QUICK COOL. The pressure has dropped to zero when the air vent/cover lock has dropped.
- Remove the pressure regulator ONLY AFTER THE PRESSURE HAS DROPPED TO ZERO.
- It is now safe to remove the lid from the canner. Lift the canner cover towards you to keep the steam away from you.
- Remove jars from canner. Test seal. When jars are cold, wipe jars, label with date and store in a cool, dry place.

Instruction for Canned Meats:

Canning meats is one of the easiest foods you can process in a pressure canner. The meat is raw packed into jars. A little salt is added. Lids and rims are put on the bottles and the bottles go into the canner. The meat is cooked during processing and is very tender and tasted great. It is ready to put into your favorite recipe or simply warm up and eat as is. It makes a great convenience food to have in your food storage!

Canned Chicken

Fresh (not frozen) boneless/skinless chicken breasts are so easy to work with.

1. Cut chicken pieces, (remove fat and other unwanted portions of the breast)
2. Pack into mason jars within 1 inch of top without precooking
3. Add ½ tsp salt per pint or 1 tsp salt per quart if desired
4. DO NOT ADD LIQUID
5. Heat lids according to manufacturer's directions. Put on lid and screw band firmly tight.
6. Process in pressure canner. Pints for 75 minutes. Quarts for 90 minutes. 13 pounds pressure in Utah.

Raw Pack Beef

Select meat suited for a roast. Boneless is easiest to work with

1. Trim meat and cut into pieces.
2. Pack loosely into mason jars to within one inch of jar
3. Add ½ tsp salt per pint or 1 tsp salt per quart if desired
4. DO NOT ADD LIQUID
5. Heat lids according to manufacturer's directions.
6. Put on lids and screw band firmly tight
7. Process in pressure canner. Pints for 75 minutes; Quarts for 90 minutes. 13 pounds pressure in Utah.

Canned Hamburger

You may can hamburger plain or add onion, garlic and other seasonings if you wish. *(I like to brown large quantities of hamburger in my steamer. The hamburger fat drips into the water below the steamer basket and the hamburger is ready to pack into jars.)*

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1. Brown meat. (add onions and garlic if desired and simmer until tender)
 2. Skim off excess fat.
 3. Pack hot into jars, leaving 1-inch head space.
 4. Add 3 TB liquid per pint to each jar. You can use a combination of hamburger fat and water.
 5. Add ½ tsp salt per pint, if you did not add your own seasonings above.
 6. Wipe rims of jars and place on lid according to manufacturer's directions.
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Dried Beans and Legumes: *Dried bean can be pressure cooked before hand for convenience in food preparation. I have seen dried beans placed in a jar with water and pressure cooked immediately. However, this method is not recommended because the beans will still cause gas problems. It is better to soak the beans for 12-18 hours before processing. Discard the original soak water and replace with new water before processing. This will cut down the amount of gas problems caused from the beans.*

Canned Beans:

This method works great for all types of dried beans: black beans, pinto beans, white beans, red beans, garbanzo beans.

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1. The night before processing, have clean pint jars and lids ready to go.
 2. Wash and sort the beans.
 3. Place ½ cup beans into each pint jar. Fill jars with water and cover them with a towel over night. (Soak for about 12 hours)
 4. Optional: Place jars in an environment where they will be at 115 F. (A food dehydrator works great!). This will initiate the sprouting process and gas problems will reduced even further.
 5. In the morning, empty the water from the jars and refill jars with hot water to leave one inch head space.
 6. Add ½ tsp salt per pint.
 7. Wipe rims of jar and place on lid according to manufacturer's directions.
 8. Place jars in pressure canner and process at 13 lbs pressure (in Utah) for 75 minutes for pints and 90 minutes for quarts.
 9. After jars are cool, wash them and place them on the shelf.
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Canned Sausage Links

You will be surprised how good these little sausages taste. All you have to do is remove them from the jar and warm them up.

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1. Brown link sausages in frying pan. It is not necessary to cook all the way through.
 2. If using sausage cakes, they can also be pan-fried to brown the outside.
 3. Pack into mason jars. *I like to use the wide mouth jars – you can get 12 links into one jar if you pack them carefully.*
 4. Add a small amount of water to the remaining fat in the pan.
 5. Add 2-3 TB of this water to each pint. 3-4 TB per quart.
 6. Wipe rims of jars and place on lid according to manufacturer's directions.
 7. Place jars in pressure canner and process at 13 lbs pressure (in Utah) for 75 minutes for pints and 90 minutes for quarts.
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