

SUNFLOWER SEEDS

You will need:
Sunflower seeds
Pickling salt or non-iodized salt
8 quart sauce pan
Baking sheets
Slotted spoon
Colander

Wash the seeds. They may look clean but you will get a lot of dust cleaned off this way. Using hot water with just a little bit of dish soap added (not enough to make suds), rub the seeds between your hands to loosen the dust and outer coating on shells. Rinse twice in hot water and drain. Do not let seeds stay in water for a prolonged period of time.

Fill an 8 quart saucepan half full with water and bring to a boil. When boiling, stir in salt until no more will dissolve; then add about 1/2 cup more (must be very salty!)

Heat oven to 425°.

Pour about 2 quarts sunflower seeds into brine, stir well. Boil about 3 minutes, remove a seed or two and taste for saltiness. If more saltiness is desired, boil a few minutes longer. Wet seeds taste a bit saltier than they will after toasting. (Don't let the seeds boil until the shells are totally soggy or you will be up all night baking them dry.) Scoop seeds out of brine, drain in a colander.

Boiled 3 1/2 min

Spread seeds on baking sheets to a single thickness--too many seeds on a sheet will be too messy to stir. Put in oven and bake 10 minutes. Stir seeds, rotate pans, taste to see how much they have dried out. *Baked 20 min*

From here on it's a matter of frequent checks on their progress. Once all of the moisture has evaporated from the pan of seeds, turn the oven down to 350°-375° and check every few minutes, stirring each time. When seeds have toasted to your liking (some people like them dry but not toasted--seeds are natural color. For a nuttier flavor, toast until a light golden brown). Pour into a metal bowl or saucepan to cool.

When all seeds are toasted, wash all of your metal utensils immediately and thoroughly so they don't rust.