





## Basic Canning Equipment

tin foil can stand in for the canning rack. But if you think you'll process more than 1 batch of jam or preserves or pickles a year, having a waterbath canner and fitted rack makes life infinitely easier.

**Jar Tongs & Hot Pads.** A jar lifter helps move hot jars around smoothly and easily. Regular kitchen tongs are an inadequate and dangerous substitute.

**Funnel.** Filling jars with a funnel saves you spills and time. Use a wide-mouth funnel to match wide-mouth jars.

**Dish rags and towels.** You'll need dish towels to wipe rings and lids dry. A clean dish rag works well to wipe of the jar tops before putting lids on. And, several layers of dish towels spread on a counter top make a safe landing spot for hot, processed jars just out of the canning kettle.

**Jars, Rings & Lids.** The size jars you use depends on the recipe. For example: Half-pint jars for chutneys and jams; Pints for applesauce and plums; Quart jars for large pickles or tomatoes. It also depends on how many people you cook for! Big family? Bigger jars! Lids can be reused if they are not damaged.

**Waterbath Canner & Rack.** A stock pot or other very large pot can be used instead of a canning kettle, and rolls of

## How to Can in 10 Easy Steps.

- 1. Heat the Water.** Bringing a canning kettle of water to a boil takes a while – up to 45 minutes over high heat. Be sure to get it on the stove before you start anything else. The canner should be about half full for pint jars and two-thirds full for quart jars.
- 2. Wash Jars, rings and lids** in hot soapy water and rinse very well. You will want to completely wipe the lids and rings dry before using them to close your full jars of produce. As you wipe used lids dry, inspect them for a good, smooth edge and holes in the rubber lining as damaged lids may not seal. Some experts recommend sterilizing jars and lids. To do this, set them in boiling water for 10 minutes or run them through the "sterilize" cycle on a dish washer.
- 3. Clean Produce.** Thoroughly rinse and pat dry the produce you're canning before you start the recipe. Cut away any rotten spots.
- 4. Fill Jars.** Ladle food into sterilized jars through a wide-mouth funnel. Leave recommended headspace (the space

between the top of the food and the top of the jar) specified in the recipe (usually one inch). Only process full jars. Keep leftovers in the fridge and eat them within a week.

**5. Release Air Bubbles.** Run a dinner knife along the inside of the jar to release any air bubbles along the sides of the jars.

**6. Wipe top edges of jars** clean with a damp cloth or the jars may not seal.

**7. Put Rings and Lids on Jars.** Center the lid so that the sealing compound around its edges touches the rims of the jars. Screw the metal rings on firmly but not tightly and don't force them. Just screw them on so they stay in place.

**8. Process Jars.** Lower the jars into the boiling water. The water level should be one inch above the tops of the jars. Add boiling water, if needed, during processing, to keep that 1-inch buffer. Cover the canning kettle to return water to a boil. Process for the time specified in the recipe.

**9. Remove Jars.** Lift jars out with tongs. Have a hot pad in your other hand, just

in case you need to grab something. Set jars on several layers of dish towels on a flat work surface. Don't tighten the rings; just let them sit until completely cool to room temperature. You may hear a slight "ping" from the jars as they seal. This is a happy sound!

**10. Test the Seal.** Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed. Store unsealed jars in the fridge and use contents sooner rather than later. Or, reprocess or remove food to a freezer bag and store in your freezer.

You may want to label the jars with contents and canning date. Store them in a cool, dark place and use within a year (some of us keep them longer than that).



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