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# **Canning Overview**

canner. The rims of the jars must be smooth, with no chips or cracks.

The two-piece lid set consists of a flat metal lid with a flanged edge. The underside of that lid has a rubber-like sealing compound. The other piece is a threaded metal screw band that fits over the rim of the jar to hold the lid in place. Follow the manufacturer's directions when using this closure, since the sealing compounds for each brand are different.

Jars kept from commercially canned products used with new two-piece lids may be used to preserve high-acid food. However, these jars are made of thin glass for use on high-speed packing machines and will not withstand extreme temperatures in home pressure canning and freezing. There might be invisible nicks or scratches, which can cause jars to break, especially in the pressure canner.

Metal cans and lids may be used for home canning low-acid meat and fish. This is done in tapered 1 pound and 1 ½ pound size cans with matching lids. Alaska salmon cans have an enamel lining that is appropriate for low-acid food. A can sealer is necessary for this process. Use University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service publications on canning in cans for information on canning these products.

Utensils helpful when home canning are a jar lifter, a jar funnel, and a thin plastic knife or spatula for filling jars. Knives, cutting board, measuring spoons and cups as well as other tools are needed for making the food to process.

### **Beginning to Can**

Read through recent research-tested recipes before beginning to can. Decide in advance what equipment you will need. Assemble all equipment and check for cleanliness and working order before starting to can.

This helps avoid searching for a needed item during the critical time when the food is being prepared and processed.

Wash jars and lids in hot, soapy water and rinse well. Don't use wire brushes, steel wool or abrasive cleaners for cleaning jars; they are likely to damage the glass. Leave the jars in hot water until they are ready to use. If a dishwasher is used, leave the jars in the machine until you are ready to use them, or keep them in hot water heating in the canner.

Jars that are to be processed for less than 10 minutes should be sterilized. Sterilize jars by submerging them in water; boil for 10 minutes.

**Choose food to can.** Consider how much will be available. Fruits and vegetables are best when ready to harvest, but rarely do they all ripen on the same day. Moose may be ready to can immediately after cut. Other points to consider:

- Pieces should be same size so the heat will penetrate evenly.
- Product should be completely ripe.
- Don't use blemished produce. It may produce a prod

## Adjustments for Altitude

Time must be increased when a boiling-water bath is used at an altitude of 1,000 feet or more. For each 1,000 feet above sea level, add 2 minutes to processing time if the time called for is 20 minutes or less. If time called for is more than 20 minutes, add 4 minutes for each 1,000 feet.

When a pressure canner is used at an altitude of 2,000 feet or more, pressure must be increased by 1 pound for each 2,000 feet of altitude. Check with your Cooperative Extension agent for recommendations.

## Steps to Successful Canning

1. Know and understand the basics of canning.
2. Check all equipment. It should be clean and in good working order; jars not chipped or cracked.
3. Select only the best product. Wash and rinse thoroughly.
4. Follow research-based recipe closely.
5. Pack food in jars; leave recommended headspace.

- Remove air bubbles. Wipe top and threads of jar.
6. Attach closures. Follow manufacturer's instruction.
7. Process using proper method and length of time.
8. When processing time is completed, remove jars and place on cloth or rack, out of drafts and with space between.
9. After 12 to 24 hours, test seals.
10. Store in cool, dry, dark place.

## References

*USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning*. Online version: [http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications\\_usda.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_usda.html). Print version: [https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/item.asp?item\\_number=AIG-539#VWTLiZRdWrY](https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/item.asp?item_number=AIG-539#VWTLiZRdWrY).

*So Easy to Preserve*. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension: [www.uga.edu/setp](http://www.uga.edu/setp).

*Ball Blue Book*. Ball Corporation, Consumer Products Division, Consumer Affairs, 345 S. High, Muncie, IN 47305-2326.

**[www.uaf.edu/ces](http://www.uaf.edu/ces) or 1-877-520-5211/907-474-5211**

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