

Preserving Cucumbers (Pickles) Recipes

Before you start:

Please read The National Center for Home Food Preservation's "Using Boiling Water Canners" before beginning. If this is your first time canning, it is recommended that you read USDA's Complete Guide to Home Canning: Guide 1: Principles of Home Canning.

Bread-and-Butter Pickles

- 6 lbs of 4- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
- 8 cups thinly sliced onions (about 3 pounds)
- 1/2 cup canning or pickling salt
- 4 cups vinegar (5 percent)
- 4-1/2 cups sugar
- 2 tbsp mustard seed
- 1-1/2 tbsp celery seed
- 1 tbsp ground turmeric
- 1 cup pickling lime (optional- for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 8 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard. Cut into 3/16-inch slices. Combine cucumbers and onions in a large bowl. Add salt. Cover with 2 inches crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate 3 to 4 hours, adding more ice as needed.

Combine remaining ingredients in a large pot. Boil 10 minutes. Drain and add cucumbers and onions and slowly reheat to boiling. Fill jars with slices and cooking syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in for more information see Table 1 or use low-temperature pasteurization treatment. The following treatment results in a better product texture but must be carefully managed to avoid possible spoilage. Place jars in a canner filled half way with warm (120° to 140°F) water. Then, add hot water to a level 1 inch above jars. Heat the water enough to maintain 180 to 185°F water temperature for 30 minutes for pint or quart jars. Check with a candy or jelly thermometer to be certain that the water temperature is at least 180°F during the entire 30 minutes. Temperatures higher than 185°F may cause unnecessary softening of pickles.

Variation for firmer pickles: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard. Cut into 3/16-inch slices. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and 1/2 cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock or enamelware container. Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution. Soak cucumber slices in lime water for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution, rinse, and resoak 1 hour in fresh cold water. Repeat the rinsing and soaking steps two more times. Handle carefully, as slices will be brittle. Drain well. With this option, the onions are not limed.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored 4 to 5 weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Variation: Squash bread-and-butter pickles. Substitute slender (1 to 1-1/2 inches in diameter) zucchini or yellow summer squash for cucumbers. Do not use the liming variation.

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Bread-and-Butter Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Pints or Quarts	10 min	15	20

Quick Fresh-Pack Dill Pickles

- 8 lbs of 3- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
 - 2 gals water
 - 1¼ cups canning or pickling salt
 - 1½ qts vinegar (5 percent)
 - ¼ cup sugar
 - 2 quarts water
 - 2 tbsp whole mixed pickling spice
 - about 3 tbsp whole mustard seed (2 tsp to 1 tsp per pint jar)
 - about 14 heads of fresh dill (1½ heads per pint jar)
- or
- 4½ tbsp dill seed (1½ tsp per pint jar)

Yield: 7 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slice off blossom end and discard, but leave ¼-inch of stem attached. Dissolve ¾ cup salt in 2 gals water. Pour over cucumbers and let stand 12 hours. Drain. Combine vinegar, ½ cup salt, sugar and 2 quarts water. Add mixed pickling spices tied in a clean white cloth. Heat to boiling. Fill jars with cucumbers. Add 1 tsp mustard seed and 1½ heads fresh dill per pint. Cover with boiling pickling solution, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1 or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment. For more information see "Low-Temperature Pasteurization Treatment" .

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Quick Fresh-Pack Dill Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Pints	10 min	15	20
	Quarts	15	20	25

Sweet Gherkin Pickles

- 7 lbs cucumbers (1-1/2 inch or less)
- 1/2 cup canning or pickling salt
- 8 cups sugar
- 6 cups vinegar (5 percent)
- 3/4 tsp turmeric
- 2 tsp celery seeds
- 2 tsp whole mixed pickling spice
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1/2 tsp fennel (optional)
- 2 tsp vanilla (optional)

Yield: 6 to 7 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slice off blossom end and discard, but leave 1/4-inch of stem attached. Place cucumbers in large container and cover with boiling water. Six to 8 hours later, and again on the second day, drain and cover with 6 quarts of fresh boiling water containing 1/4-cup salt. On the third day, drain and prick cucumbers with a table fork. Combine and bring to boil 3 cups vinegar, 3 cups sugar, turmeric, and spices. Pour over cucumbers. Six to 8 hours later, drain and save the pickling syrup. Add another 2 cups each of sugar and vinegar and reheat to boil. Pour over pickles. On the fourth day, drain and save syrup. Add another 2 cups sugar and 1 cup vinegar. Heat to boiling and pour over pickles. Drain and save pickling syrup 6 to 8 hours later. Add 1 cup sugar and 2 tsp vanilla and heat to boiling. Fill sterile pint jars, with pickles and cover with hot syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. For more information on sterilizing jars see "Sterilization of Empty Jars". Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1, or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment. For more information see "Low- Temperature Pasteurization Treatment".

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Sweet Gherkin Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Pints	5 min	10	15

14-Day Sweet Pickles

Can be canned whole, in strips, or in slices

14-day Sweet Pickles

- 4 lbs of 2- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers (If packed whole, use cucumbers of uniform size)
- 3/4 cup canning or pickling salt (Separated – 1/4 cup on each of the 1st, 3rd, and 5th days)
- 2 tsp celery seed
- 2 tbsp mixed pickling spices
- 5-1/2 cups sugar
- 4 cups vinegar (5 percent)

Yield: About 5 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slice off blossom end and discard, but leave 1/4-inch of stem attached. Place whole cucumbers in suitable 1-gallon container. Add 1/4 cup canning or pickling salt to 2 quarts water and bring to a boil. Pour over cucumbers. Add suitable cover and weight. Place clean towel over container and keep the temperature at about 70°F.

On the third and fifth days, drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers and rescald cover and weight. Return cucumbers to container. Add 1/4 cup salt to 2 quarts fresh water and boil. Pour over cucumbers. Replace cover and weight, and re-cover with clean towel. On the seventh day, drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers and rescald containers, cover, and weight. Slice or strip cucumbers, if desired, and return to container. Place celery seed and pickling spices in small cheesecloth bag. Combine 2 cups sugar and 4 cups vinegar in a saucepan. Add spice bag, bring to a boil and pour pickling solution over cucumbers. Add cover and weight, and re-cover with clean towel.

On each of the next six days, drain syrup and spice bag and save. Add 1/2 cup sugar each day and bring to a boil in a saucepan. Remove cucumbers and rinse. Scald container, cover, and weight daily. Return cucumbers to container, add boiled syrup, cover, weight, and re-cover with towel.

On the 14th day, drain syrup into saucepan. Fill sterile pint jars, or clean quart jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Add 1/2 cup sugar to syrup and bring to boil. Remove spice bag. For more

information see "Sterilization of Empty Jars" Pour hot syrup over cucumbers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1 or use low-temperature pasteurization treatment. For more information see "Low-Temperature Pasteurization Treatment,".

Table 1. Recommended process time for 14-day Sweet Pickles in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Pints	5 min	10	15
	Quarts	10	15	20

Quick Sweet Pickles

May be canned as either strips or slices.

- 8 lbs of 3- to 4-inch pickling cucumbers
- 1/3 cup canning or pickling salt
- 4-1/2 cups sugar
- 3-1/2 cups vinegar (5 percent)
- 2 tsp celery seed
- 1 tbsp whole allspice
- 2 tbsp mustard seed
- 1 cup pickling lime (optional- for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 7 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard, but leave 1/4 inch of stem attached. Slice or cut in strips, if desired. Place in bowl and sprinkle with 1/3 cup salt. Cover with 2 inches of crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate 3 to 4 hours. Add more ice as needed. Drain well.

Combine sugar, vinegar, celery seed, allspice, and mustard seed in 6-quart kettle. Heat to boiling.

Hot pack--Add cucumbers and heat slowly until vinegar solution returns to boil. Stir occasionally to make sure mixture heats evenly. Fill sterile jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. For more information see "Sterilization of Empty Jars".

Raw pack--Fill jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Add hot pickling syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1 or use the low

temperature pasteurization treatment. For more information see "Low-Temperature Pasteurization Treatment,".

Variation for firmer pickles: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard, but leave 1/4-inch of stem attached. Slice or strip cucumbers. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and 1/2 cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock or enamel-ware container. **Caution: Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution.** Soak cucumber slices or strips in lime water solution for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution and rinse and resoak 1 hour in fresh cold water. Repeat the rinsing and resoaking two more times. Handle carefully because slices or strips will be brittle. Drain well.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored 4 to 5 weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Variation: Add 2 slices of raw whole onion to each jar before filling with cucumbers.

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Quick Sweet Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

		Process Time at Altitudes of		
Style of Pack	Jar Size	0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Pints or Quarts	5 min	10	15
	Pints	10	15	20
Raw	Quarts	15	20	25

Reduced-Sodium Sliced Dill Pickles

- 4 lbs (3- to 5-inch) pickling cucumbers
- 6 cups vinegar (5 percent)
- 6 cups sugar
- 2 tbsp canning or pickling salt
- 1-1/2 tsp celery seed
- 1-1/2 tsp mustard seed
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 8 heads fresh dill

Yield: About 8 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slice off blossom end and discard. Cut cucumbers in 1/4-inch slices. Combine vinegar, sugar, salt, celery, and mustard seeds in large saucepan. Bring mixture to boiling. Place 2 slices of onion and 1/2 dill head on bottom of each pint jar. Fill

jars with cucumber slices, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Add 1 slice of onion and 1/2 dill head on top. Pour hot pickling solution over cucumbers, leaving 1/4-inch headspace.

Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1.

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Reduced-Sodium Sliced Dill Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Pints	15 min	20	25

Reduced-Sodium Sliced Sweet Pickles

- 4 lbs (3- to 4-inch) pickling cucumbers
- Brining solution:
 - 1 qt distilled white vinegar (5 percent)
 - 1 tbsp canning or pickling salt
 - 1 tbsp mustard seed
 - 1/2 cup sugar
- Canning syrup:
 - 1-2/3 cups distilled white vinegar (5 percent)
 - 3 cups sugar
 - 1 tbsp whole allspice
 - 2-1/4 tsp celery seed

Yield: About 4 to 5 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers and cut 1/16 inch off blossom end, and discard. Cut cucumbers into 1/4-inch slices. Combine all ingredients for canning syrup in a saucepan and bring to boiling. Keep syrup hot until used. In a large kettle, mix the ingredients for the brining solution. Add the cut cucumbers, cover, and simmer until the cucumbers change color from bright to dull green (about 5 to 7 minutes). Drain the cucumber slices. Fill jars, and cover with hot canning syrup leaving 1/2-inch headspace.

Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in Table 1.

Table 1. Recommended process time for **Reduced-Sodium Sliced Sweet Pickles** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Pints	10 min	15	20

No-Sugar Added Sweet Cucumber Slices

- 3½ pounds of pickling cucumbers
- boiling water to cover sliced cucumbers
- 4 cups cider vinegar (5%)
- 3 cups Splenda®
- 1 tablespoon canning salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon mustard seed
- 1 tablespoon whole allspice
- 1 tablespoon celery seed
- 4 one-inch cinnamon sticks

Yield: About 4 or 5 pint jars.

Procedure:

1. Wash and rinse pint canning jars; keep hot until ready to use. Prepare lids according to manufacturer's directions.
2. Wash cucumbers. Slice 1/16th-inch off the blossom ends and discard. Slice cucumbers into ¼-inch thick slices. Pour boiling water over the cucumber slices and let stand 5 to 10 minutes. Drain off the hot water and pour cold water over the cucumbers. Let cold water run continuously over the cucumber slices, or change water frequently until cucumbers are cooled. Drain slices well.
3. Mix vinegar, 1 cup water, Splenda® and all spices in a 10-quart Dutch oven or stockpot. Bring to a boil. Add drained cucumber slices carefully to the boiling liquid. Return to a boil.
4. Place one cinnamon stick in each jar, if desired. With a slotted spoon, fill hot pickle slices into clean, hot pint jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Cover with boiling hot pickling brine, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; apply two-piece metal canning lids.
5. Process in a boiling water canner according to the recommendations in Table 1. Let cool, undisturbed, 12 to 24 hours and check for seals.

Table 1. Recommended process time for **No-Sugar Added Sweet Cucumber Pickle Slices** in a boiling-water canner.

Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Hot	Pints	10 min	15	20

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Recipes are adapted from

- "Complete Guide to Home Canning," Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539, USDA, revised 2009.
- The University of Georgia, Athens, for the National Center for Home Food Preservation. Released by Elizabeth L. Andress, Ph.D., Department of Foods and Nutrition, College of Family and Consumer Sciences. August 2003.

They are available from The National Center for Home Food Preservation at http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can6b_pickle.html