



## Step-by-Step Canning: High-Acid Foods

### Introduction

Because they are relatively easy to preserve, foods containing high amounts of acids are a popular choice for fresh preservers. These foods provide you with the opportunity to prepare and enjoy a wide array of creative recipes, from excellent side dishes to delectable desserts. High-acid foods include fruits, fruit juices, jams, jellies, and other fruit spreads, salsas, tomatoes with added acid, pickles, relishes, chutneys, sauces, vinegars, and condiments.

### You Will Need

- A tested canning recipe such as one found in the Ball Blue Book®.
- A boiling water canner or a large, deep saucepot with a lid, and a rack.
- Glass preserving jars, lids, and bands (always use new lids)
- Common kitchen utensils.
- Fresh produce and other quality ingredients



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## Step 1

READ through the recipe and instructions. Assemble equipment and ingredients. Follow guidelines for recipe preparation, jar size, preserving method, and processing time.



## Step 2

CHECK jars, lids, and bands for proper functioning. Jars with nicks, cracks, uneven rims, or sharp edges may prevent sealing or cause jar breakage. The underside of lids should not have scratches or uneven or incomplete sealing compound as this may prevent sealing. Bands should fit on jars. Wash jars, lids, and bands in hot, soapy water. Rinse well. Dry.

## Step 3

HEAT jars in an oven until ready for use. Keeping jars hot prevents them from breaking when hot food is added. Jars can also be heated in a hot water bath or in a dishwasher.

Place lids in a small saucepan. Cover lids with water and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Keep the lids hot until ready to use. Do not boil lids as this may cause seal failure. Leave bands at room temperature for easy handling.



## Step 4

PREPARE boiling water canner. Fill canner half full of water. Place over medium-high heat. Keep water at a simmer until the jars are filled and placed in the canner. You do not necessarily need to purchase a boiling water canner if you do not own one. The pot must be large enough to fully surround and immerse the jars in water by 1 or 2 inches and allow for the water to boil rapidly with the lid on. If you do not have a rack use a cake rack or bands tied together.

## Step 5

PREPARE test preserving recipe using fresh produce and other quality ingredients.

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## Step 6

REMOVE hot jar from the oven using an oven mitt. Fill the jars one at a time with prepared food using a funnel leaving the headspace recommended in the recipe ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch for soft spreads such as jams and jellies and fruit juices;  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch for fruits, pickles, salsa, sauces, and tomatoes).

Remove air bubbles, if stated in the recipe, by sliding a rubber spatula between the jar and the food to release trapped air and ensure proper headspace during processing.

## Step 7

CLEAN rim and threads of the jar using a clean, damp cloth to remove any food residue. Remove lid from hot water using a fork or magnetic lid lifter. Center the hot lid on the jar allowing the sealing compound to come in contact with the jar rim. Apply band and adjust until it finger tight.

Place filled jars in the canner until the recipe is used up or the canner is full. Check that the water covers the jars by 1 to 2 inches.



## Step 8

PLACE the lid on the canner. Bring the water to a full, rolling boil, and begin processing time.

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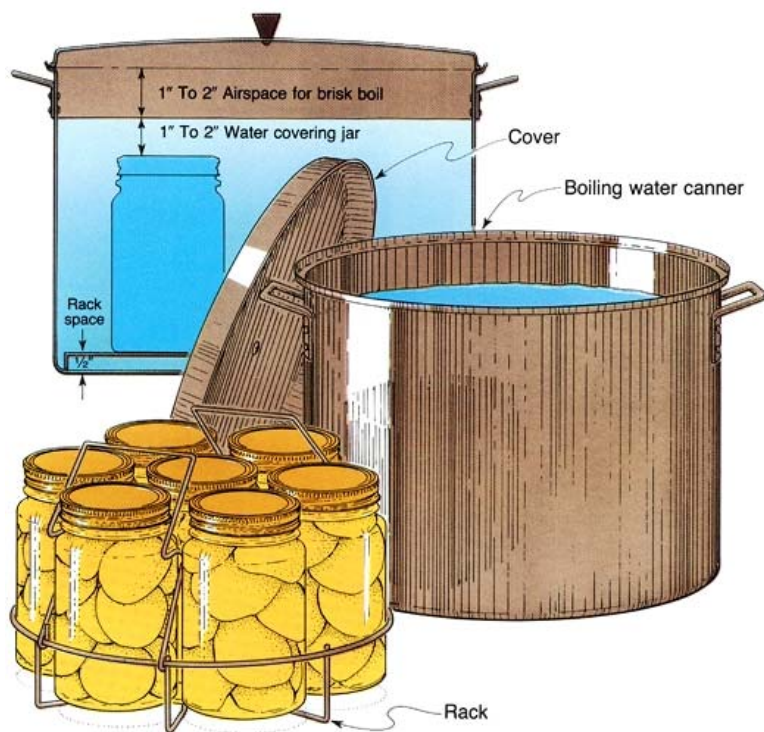


## Step 9

PROCESS jars at the recommended pounds pressure for the processing time indicated in the tested preserving recipe. When processing time is complete, turn off the heat and remove the canner lid. Allow the jars to stand in the canner for 5 minutes to adjust to the outside temperature.

## Step 10

REMOVE the jars from the canner and set upright on a towel to prevent jar breakage that can occur from temperature difference. Leave the jars undisturbed for 12 to 24 hours. The bands should not be retightened as this may interfere with the sealing process.



## Step 11

CHECK the lids for a good seal. The lids should not flex up and down when the center is pressed. Remove the bands. Try to lift the lids off with your fingertips. If the lid cannot be lifted off, the lid has a good seal. If the lid does not seal within 24 hours, the product can be immediately reprocessed or refrigerated. Clean the jars and lids, label, and store in a cool, dry, dark place for up to 1 year.

