



**Canning Basics**

**Essential Equipment**

Canning pot	Large pot with a rack to keep jars off the bottom.
Canning jars	Make sure there's no cracks or damage.
Lids and rings	New lids each time, rings can be reused.
Jar lifter	Essential for safely removing hot jars.
Funnel	For neatly filling jars.
Bubble remover/measuring tool	To release trapped air bubbles.

**Canning Methods**

Water Bath Canning	For high-acid foods like fruits, jams, and pickles. Jars are fully submerged in boiling water.
Pressure Canning	For low-acid foods like vegetables and meats. Requires a pressure canner to reach higher temperatures.
Open-kettle canning	Not recommended due to safety concerns.
Steam Canning	Acceptable for some high-acid foods under specific conditions.

**Safety First**

<b>Always</b> follow tested recipes from reputable sources like the USDA or Ball. Improper canning can lead to botulism.
Ensure proper headspace (the space between the food and the lid) as specified in your recipe.
Process jars for the correct time according to altitude and recipe.
After processing, let jars cool completely before testing the seal.
A properly sealed jar will have a lid that is concave and doesn't flex when pressed.

**Drying and Dehydrating**

**Suitable Foods**

Fruits	Apples, bananas, berries, grapes, mangoes, peaches, pears, plums.
Vegetables	Carrots, celery, corn, green beans, mushrooms, onions, peppers, tomatoes.
Herbs	Basil, chives, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, thyme.
Meats	Beef, poultry, fish (for jerky or dried snacks).

**Dehydration Methods**

Electric Dehydrator	Offers precise temperature control and even drying.
Oven Drying	Use the lowest oven setting with the door slightly ajar.
Sun Drying	Suitable for hot, dry climates. Protect food from insects and moisture.
Air Drying	Best for herbs and some vegetables. Hang in a well-ventilated area.

**Preparation Tips**

Slice food into uniform pieces for even drying.
Pre-treat fruits like apples and bananas with lemon juice to prevent browning.
Blanch vegetables before drying to preserve color and nutrients.
Ensure food is thoroughly dried to prevent mold growth. It should be leathery or brittle.
Cool food completely before storing in airtight containers.

**Freezing Foods**

**Best Foods for Freezing**

Fruits	Berries, peaches, mangoes (most fruits freeze well).
Vegetables	Broccoli, carrots, peas, spinach (blanch first).
Meats	Beef, chicken, pork, fish.
Baked Goods	Bread, cookies, muffins.
Prepared Meals	Soups, stews, casseroles.

**Freezing Methods**

Freezer Bags	Remove as much air as possible to prevent freezer burn.
Airtight Containers	Choose freezer-safe containers.
Flash Freezing	Freeze individual items (like berries) on a tray before transferring to a bag.
Wrapping	Wrap meats tightly in freezer paper or plastic wrap.

**Tips for Best Results**

Blanch vegetables before freezing to stop enzyme action and preserve quality.
Cool foods completely before freezing to prevent ice crystal formation.
Label and date all packages to keep track of what's inside and when it was frozen.
Use frozen foods within recommended timeframes (e.g., 8-12 months for meats, 1 year for fruits and vegetables).
Thaw foods in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave (if cooking immediately).

# Fermenting Foods

## Getting Started

Basic Brine	Salt + Water (e.g., 2-5% salt concentration).
Starter Culture (Optional)	Whey, kefir grains, kombucha SCOBY, or powdered starter.
Fermentation Vessel	Glass jars, crocks, or specialized fermenting containers.
Weight	To keep food submerged in the brine (glass weights, ziplock bag filled with water).

## Popular Fermented Foods

Sauerkraut	Fermented cabbage.
Kimchi	Fermented Korean vegetables (usually cabbage and radish).
Pickles	Fermented cucumbers.
Kombucha	Fermented sweet tea.
Kefir	Fermented milk drink.
Sourdough Bread	Bread made with a fermented starter.

## Safety and Troubleshooting

Use clean equipment and ingredients to prevent unwanted bacteria growth.
Ensure food stays submerged in brine to prevent mold.
White scum or Kahm yeast on the surface is usually harmless. Scrape it off.
Trust your senses: if it smells or looks off, discard it.
Fermenting times vary depending on temperature and desired taste.