



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

A Guide to Water Bath Canning

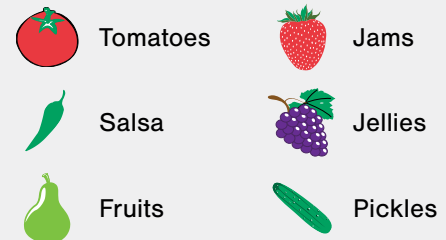
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Water bath canners have fitted lids and removable wire racks. While they come in many sizes, the canner must be deep enough to allow a minimum of 1-2 inches of briskly boiling water that covers the top of jars during processing.

Water bath canning is the method used for preserving high acid and acidified foods.

These foods:

- have a pH of 4.6 or lower
- are mostly protected from bacterial growth
- have molds and yeasts present, but easily destroyed when water bath canned properly



The Importance of Altitude:

Altitude affects canning recipes, just like it does when you bake. Recipes are written for altitudes up to 1,000 feet above sea level. Check the chart for adjustments based on your altitude.

Altitude (feet)	Water Bath (minutes added)
1,001-3,000	5 minutes
3,001-6,000	10 minutes
6,001-8,000	15 minutes
8,001-10,000	20 minutes

Find your altitude by downloading the Altimeter App (Free!) or visiting: whatismyelevation.com

Safety First!

Following a safe recipe is important. When canning foods, you should:

- Always use evidence-based recipes from sources such as:
 - Ball canning books
 - USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning
- NEVER use recipes from unsafe sources such as:
 - Pinterest
 - Blog Posts
 - Old family recipes
 - freeze homemade recipes for long-term storage instead
 - Recipes older than 1994 may be unsafe.



Steps for Successful Water Bath Canning

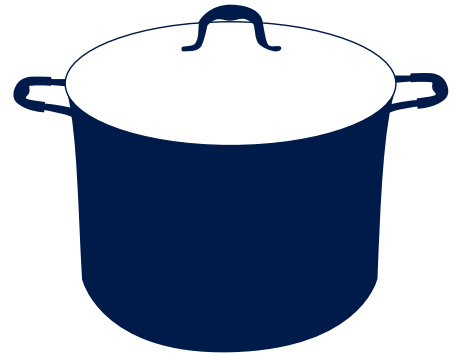
- 1 Fill canner half full of water. Place on burner over medium heat.
- 2 Prepare food. Fill jars as directed, ensuring proper headspace. Remove air bubbles.
- 3 Clean rim and threads of jar using a clean, damp cloth.
- 4 Place lid and band on jar, screw on until finger-tip tight.
- 5 Place jars on wire rack in the canner. Ensure water level is 1-2 in. above the jars.
- 6 Place lid on canner. Turn heat to its highest position, bring water to a boil.
- 7 Set timer according to the recipe. Adjust for altitude, if necessary.
- 8 When processing time is complete, turn off heat, remove canner lid and let sit for 5 minutes.
- 9 Remove jars from canner and set upright on a towel.
- 10 Leave jars undisturbed for 12-24 hours.
- 11 Check lids for seals. Lids should not flex up and down when the center is pressed.
- 12 Remove bands, test seals by gently pulling at the lid with your fingers.
- 13 Store in a cool, dry, dark place for up to 18 months.

Cleaning Your Canner:

- Clean the darkened inside surface by mixing 1 TBS vinegar to each quart of water.
- Heat water to a boil, and boil covered until the dark deposits disappear.
- Wash with hot soapy water, rinse, and dry.

Storing Your Canner:

- Store in a clean, dry location with crumpled clean paper towels inside the canner.
- This will help absorb moisture and odors.
- Place the lid upside down on the canner for ventilation.
- Never put the lid on the canner and seal it during storage.



Sources: National Center for Home Food Preservation: nchfp.uga.edu

The All New Ball Book of Canning & Preserving, First Edition 2016

For more information: extension.sdstate.edu/food