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See www.pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm for many other canning directions and recipes

How to Make Homemade Canned Peppers, Hot or sweet, including chilies, jalapeno, bell, banana and pimiento peppers

You think making and canning your own peppers is difficult or expensive? Not at all! The only trick is, you really do need a pressure canner. So, here's how to can peppers! The directions are complete with instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated. In the winter when you open a jar, the peppers will taste MUCH better than any store-bought canned peppers.

You DO need a pressure canner! If you don't have one, you can still make [pickled peppers - see this page](#). Every university food science department and the government will tell you that it just is not safe to use the water bath bath method; it takes the higher temperatures of the pressure canner to kill the botulism bacteria. BUT, with a pressure canner it's easy. And although a pressure canner costs \$100 to \$200 (see this page for pressure canners models, makes and prices), they last a lifetime, and your children and grandchildren may be using it. You can also find free information from the USDA in this PDF file (it will take a while to load!) about [selecting and using canners](#) here!

Prepared this way, the jars have a shelf life of about 12 months, and aside from storing in a cool, dark place, require no special attention.

Ingredients and Equipment

- Peppers (see step 1)
- Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
- Jar funnel (\$2 at Wal-Mart)
- At least 1 large pot
- Large spoons and ladles
- Ball jars (Publix, Wal-Mart carry them - about \$8 per dozen quart jars including the lids and rings)
- Salt (optional - I don't use any)
- One 6 - 8 quart pot or saucepan
- 1 Pressure Canner (a large pressure pot with a lifting rack to sterilize the jars after filling (about \$75 to \$200 at mall kitchen stores, Wal-Mart, cheaper online; [see this page for more information](#)). For low acid foods (most vegetables, you can't use an open water bath canner, it has to be a pressure canner to get the high temperatures to kill the bacteria. If you plan on canning every year, they're worth the investment.

Recipe and Directions

Step 1 - Selecting the peppers

The most important step! You need peppers that are FRESH and crisp. Limp, old peppers will make nasty tasting canned peppers. Guests will probably throw them at you.. Select filled but tender, firm, crisp peppers. Remove and discard any soft, diseased, spotted and rusty pods.

Select small peppers, preferably 1 inch to 1 and 1/4 inch in diameter. Larger peppers are often too fibrous and tough.



<http://www.PickYourOwn.org/canningpeppers.htm>

Hot pepper caution: Wear plastic or rubber gloves and do not touch your face while handling or cutting hot peppers. If you do not wear gloves, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face or eyes. Hot peppers can burn your eyes and skin - ever heard of pepper spray?

How many peppers and where to get them

You can grow your own, pick your own, or buy them at the grocery store. An average of 9 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints jars. A bushel of peppers weighs 25 pounds and yields 20 to 30 pints canned; an average of 1 pound per pint

Step 2 - Prepare the jars and pressure canner

Wash the jars and lids

This is a good time to get the jars ready! The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sterilize" cycle. Otherwise put the jars in boiling water for 10 minutes. I just put the lids in a small pot of almost boiling water for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" (available from WalMart, Target, and sometimes at grocery stores) to pull them out.



Get a large pot of water boiling

We will use this water to pour over the peppers and fill each jar with liquid, after we've packed them full of peppers. I use the largest pot I have, so that there is plenty of clean, boiling water ready when I need it.



Get the pressure canner heating up

Rinse out your pressure canner, put the rack plate in the bottom, and fill it to a depth of 4 inches with hot tap water. (of course, follow the instruction that came with the canner, if they are different). Put it on the stove over low heat, with the lid OFF of it, just to get it heating up for later on.

Step 3 - Wash the peppers!

I'm sure you can figure out how to rinse the peppers in plain cold or lukewarm water.



Step 4 - Cut up the peppers, remove seeds



Small peppers may be left whole. Large peppers may be quartered. Remove cores and seeds. Slash two or four slits in each pepper

Step 5 - Blister the peppers

Peppers have a skin that turns REALLY tough when you can the peppers, so you've got to remove the skin before canning. Fortunately, there is an easy trick to remove the skins. It's called "blistering". Just heat up a fry pan to medium hot, and lay the peppers in there skin side down. In just a few minutes, the skin will start bubble up and darken - that's blistering - once cooled, the skin peels off easily by hand.

Here are some other methods for how to blister peppers:

Oven or broiler method: Place peppers in a hot oven or broiler set at 400° to 450°F (205° to 232°C) for 6 to 8 minutes; using tongs carefully turn pepper often until skin blisters evenly on all sides.

Stove top method: Place peppers on wire mesh over a hot electric or gas burner; using tongs carefully turn peppers frequently, exposing all surfaces to the heat source until skin blisters evenly on all sides.

Outdoor grill method: Place peppers on a charcoal or gas grill about 5 to 6 inches above glowing coals; using tongs carefully turn peppers frequently (skin side down if they are cut up), exposing all surfaces to the heat source until skin blisters evenly on all sides.

Microwave oven method: Place peppers in a microwave safe dish; cover with secure air-tight lid to allow for steam build up. Place container on rotating plate in the center of the oven, then microwave for 7 to 8 minutes depending the oven wattage and power level (settings may vary depending on microwave oven used). The blistering is not visible with this method. However, the skin will have a tougher, more brittle texture compared to the raw pepper. Allow steam to fully develop in the covered container for 1 to 2 minutes after microwave cooking. Caution: The hot steam will be released from container when the lid is opened - don't get burned!

Peeling the Peppers

Allow the peppers to cool by placing them in a pan and cover with a damp cloth. This will make peeling the peppers easier. Then pull the blistered skin off the rest of the pepper with a gentle tug and an occasional rinse with water. In areas of the pepper where the blistering was not complete, just scrape the skin off with a knife or vegetable peeler.

Step 6 - Pack the jars and pour boiling water into each packed jar



Fill jars, leaving 1-inch of headspace. Flatten whole peppers. You may add 1/2 teaspoon of salt to each pint jar, if desired for taste (it is not a preservative). Fill jars loosely with peppers. Be sure to leave 1 inch of space at the TOP of the jar. That is called "headspace" and is needed for expansion during heading. Use a ladle or pyrex measuring cup to carefully fill each packed jar with water from pot of boiling water that they were cooked in. The peppers should be covered and there should still be 1 inch of airspace left in the top of each jar. Be careful not to burn yourself, (or anyone else - children should be kept back

during this step!)

Step 7 - Put the lids and rings on

Put the lids on each jar and seal them by putting a ring on and screwing it down snugly (but not with all your might, just "snug").



Step 8 - Put the jars in the canner and the lid on the canner (but still vented)



Using the jar tongs, put the jars on the rack in the canner. By now the water level has probably boiled down to 3 inches. If it is lower than that, add more hot tap water to the canner. When all the jars that the canner will hold are in, out on the lid and twist it into place, but leave the weight off (or valve open, if you have that type of pressure canner).

Step 9 - Let the canner vent steam for 10 minutes

Put the heat on high and let the steam escape through the vent for 10 minutes to purge the airspace inside the canner.

Step 10 - Put the weight on and let the pressure build

After 10 minutes of venting, put the weight on and close any openings to allow the pressure to build to 11 pounds.



Step 11 - Process for 35 minutes

If you have a dial-type pressure canner like I do, once the gauge hits 11 pounds, start your timer going - for 35 minutes. Adjust the heat, as needed, to maintain 11 pounds of pressure.

Note: the charts at right will help you determine the right processing time and pressure, if you have a different type of canner, or are above sea level.

It is important to learn how to operate your pressure canner by reading the owner's manual that came with your particular canner. If you can not find your owner's manual, you can obtain find one online: Here is where to find some common manufacturer's manuals:

- [Presto canner manuals](#)

or by contacting the company that made your canner. Give the model number to the manufacturer, and they will send you the right manual. More [notes on pressure canners from Colorado State University](#).



Recommended process time for peppers in a dial-gauge pressure canner.					
		Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of			
Jar Size	Process Time	0 - 2,000 ft	2,001 - 4,000 ft	4,001 - 6,000 ft	6,001 - 8,000 ft
Half-pints or Pints	35 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb

Recommended process time for peppers in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.			
			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of
Jar Size	Process Time	0 - 1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Half-pints or Pints	35 min	10 lb	15 lb

Step 12 - Turn off the heat and let it cool down

After 35 minutes at 11 pounds (or as directed in the table above), turn off the heat and let the canner cool down. After the pressure drops to zero (usually, you can tell but the "click" sound of the safety release vents opening, as well as but the gauge. Wait 3 more minutes, then open the vent or remove the weight and allow the steam to escape.

Step 13 - Remove the jars

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool on a wooden cutting board or a towel, without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight), here they won't be bumped. You can then remove the rings if you like. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok. You're done!



Other Equipment:

From left to right:

1. Jar lifting tongs to pick up hot jars
2. Lid lifter - to remove lids from the pot of boiling water (sterilizing)
3. Lid - disposable - you may only use them once
4. Ring - holds the lids on the jar until after the jars cool - then you don't need them.
5. Canning jar funnel - to fill the jars and keep the rims clean.

