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How to Make Freeze Rhubarb at Home - Easily!

If you like rhubarb in the winter for cobblers, pies or just cooked, stewed Rhubarb in a bowl; just imagine how good it would taste if you had picked fresh or bought rhubarb from a farm stand and then quickly froze it at home! It is also one of the simplest ways to put up a fruit for the winter. Here's how to do it, complete instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated.

In the winter when you pull them from the freezer, the rhubarb will taste MUCH better than anything you've ever had from a store, and by selecting the right fruit, it will use less sugar than store-bought frozen rhubarb. Rhubarb can be packed in very light, light or medium sugar syrup. They can also be packed in water, apple juice or white grape juice.

Prepared this way, the frozen fruit will have a freezer life of about 12 months.

If you would like some rhubarb recipes, see my page on [how to make rhubarb-strawberry jam](#) or this page on [rhubarb-strawberry pie](#). It is really SO easy! If you would rather [can the rhubarb, see this page](#).

Directions for Making Frozen Rhubarb

Ingredients and Equipment

- Fresh Rhubarb (see step 1)
- Ziploc freezer bags, quart size or a vacuum food sealer and bags for it.
 - Sugar (or other sweetener: Stevia (or if you prefer, Splenda), Nutrasweet, or fruit juice)

Freezing Directions

Step 1 - Selecting the rhubarb

The most important step! Choose firm, tender, well-colored stalks with good flavor and few fibers. The color should be appropriate for the variety of rhubarb: some should be all red when they are ripe, others are still largely green.



If you don't know, ask the farmer or grocery.

Step 2 - How much rhubarb and where to get it

You can pick your own, or buy them at a farm market or the grocery store. For very large quantities (more than a few bushels), you'll find that real* farmer's markets, like the Farmer's Market in Forest Park, Georgia have them at the best prices.

You can freeze any quantity of rhubarb.

* - not the cutesy, fake farmer's markets that are just warehouse grocery stores that call themselves farmer's markets.

Step 3 - Wash the rhubarb

I'm sure you can figure out how to wash the rhubarb in plain cold or lukewarm water.> Just rub the dirt off with your fingers, under running water.

Step 4 - Cut up the rhubarb

Rhubarb varieties differ - if the type you have has a tough outer skin, peel it off. You can tell if it is tough if it peels off easily as a thin skin.

You'll then need to remove the ends of the rhubarb - the tough part that connects to the plant (as show at left) and then dice the stalks into 1/2 inch pieces.



Step 5 - Dry Pack or in liquid (Wet Pack)?

You can pack rhubarb dry (which is best for short term storage, up to 3 or 4 months) or wet, in a sugar, honey or fruit juice solution (which works better for longer storage). If you are freezing to use in a pie later, dry pack is probably best.

Dry Pack: Skip to step 7

If you choose a dry pack, just skip to step 7.

Wet Pack: Prepare the sugar (or other sweetener) solution

Rhubarb can be packed in a solution of water and sugar or fruit juice. It's up to you which to use. Sugar is added to improve flavor, help stabilize color, and retain the shape of the fruit. You only need enough solution to cover the rhubarb; about 1 cup per quart. It is not added as a preservative; but the solution does prevent drying, freezer burn and oxidation (browning). Peach, white grape or apple juice works great and is a natural alternative to using processed sugar!

Sugar Syrups

Type of Syrup	Sugar	Water	Yield
Fruit juice (peach, apple or white grape)	0	0	4 cups
Stevia (or if you prefer, Splenda) (2 cups)	0	6 cups	6 cups
Light sugar	2 cups	6 cups	7 cups
Medium sugar	3 cups	6 cups	7.2 cups
Heavy sugar	4 cups	6 cups	7.4 cups

Fruit juice syrup requires no preparation. To prepare sugar and Stevia (or if you prefer, Splenda) syrups, while heating the water in a pot on the stove (or microwave), add sugar slowly, stirring constantly to dissolve. Once it is dissolved remove it from the heat. After preparing the liquid syrup, let it cool before mixing it with the rhubarb!

Step 6 - Wet Pack Only: Mix the rhubarb with the sweetener solution

In a large bowl, combine the rhubarb and sweetener solution. Mix completely.

Step 7 - Fill the bags and exclude air pockets

The photos show peaches, but it is the same for rhubarb!

Ladle the rhubarb and solution into the freezer bags.

A. Ziploc Bags

If you are using ziploc bags, squeeze out any air bubbles and seal them. put them in the freezer on the coldest shelf. Since rhubarb, nectarines, plums, figs, and other soft fruit will be covered in a liquid, it is quite easy to remove all the air with a ziploc bag! Be sure to use the "freezer ziplocs", not the regular ones. The freezer ones are thicker and will be much less like to break, split or allow freezer burn. **TIP:** If you don't own a vacuum food sealer to freeze foods, place food in a Ziploc bags, zip the top shut but leave enough space to insert the tip of a soda straw. When straw is in place, remove air by sucking the air out. To remove straw, press straw closed where inserted and finish pressing the bag closed as you remove straw.

B. Vacuum Food Sealer

If you are using a vacuum food sealer, stand the bags upright on the shelves on the door of your freezer (so they don't spill) and allow them to freeze overnight (vacuum food sealers require liquids to be frozen first, or they would be sucked into the pump!)

The next day, take the bags out of the freezer, seal them and pop them back in the freezer!



If any of the frozen rhubarb are exposed on the surface, just pour a little more sugar syrup (or fruit juice, etc.) to cover them and put it back in the freezer. When that freezes, you can seal them.

Photos on the previous page:

1. Rhubarb in foodsaver bags standing upright, unsealed, in the freezer; to be frozen.
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Tips!

- To use them, just set them in the fridge overnight, or on the counter for a couple of hours. I wouldn't recommend the microwave unless you are planning to cook with them!
 - Allow about 1/2 inch of head space. Do not use glass because the expansion in the freezer will break the glass. (yes, if you leave enough headspace, it may work some of the time...)
 - If fruit is not covered by liquid it may darken or get freezer burn during storage (but does not necessarily mean it is spoiled, as all fruits will darken somewhat). To avoid this, remove all air bubbles and while the bags are freezing, stand them so that the fruit is entirely covered by liquid.
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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Can I freeze rhubarb dry without any sweetener?

A. Yes. You might get some freezer burn, so you might want to add a little juice (peach or white grape) to fill the air spaces. Or pack them dry using a vacuum food sealer which would eliminate the need to add juice and still avoid most freezer burn.