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## How to Freeze Carrots!

If you like frozen carrots in the winter, just imagine how good it would taste if you had picked a bag yourself and then quickly froze it at home! It is also one of the simplest ways to put up a vegetable for the winter. Here's how to do it, complete instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated. The carrots will taste **MUCH** better than anything you've ever had from a store.

### Directions for Freezing carrots

#### Ingredients and Equipment

- fresh carrots - any quantity. I figure one handful per serving.
- Vacuum food sealer or "ziploc" type freezer bags (the freezer bag version is heavier and protects better against freezer burn.
- 1 Large pot of boiling water
- 2 large bowls, one filled with cold water and ice.
- 1 sharp knife

### Instructions

#### Step 1 - Get yer carrots!

Start with fresh carrots - as fresh as you can get. Select young, tender, coreless, medium length carrots. If there is a delay between harvesting and freezing, put it in the refrigerator or put ice on it. And don't use carrots that are old, limp, overripe or dried out (see below):



## Step 2 - Wash the carrots!



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



## Step 3 - Peel the carrots, trim the ends and cut into smaller pieces

A vegetable peeler works great! Then just take a sharp knife and cut off both ends (about 1/4 of an inch, or half the width of an average woman's little finger). Leave small carrots whole. Cut others into thin slices, 1/4-inch cubes or lengthwise strips as you prefer!

Of course, if you prefer Julienne cut carrots, you can cut the carrots lengthwise in thin strips instead.



#### **Step 4 - Get the pots ready**

Get the pot of boiling water ready (about 2/3 filled) and a LARGE bowl with ice and cold water.

#### **Step 5 - Blanch the carrots.**

All fruits and vegetables contain **enzymes and bacteria** that, over time, break down the destroy nutrients and change the color, flavor, and texture of food during frozen storage. carrots requires a brief heat treatment, called **blanching, in boiling water or steam**, to destroy the enzymes before freezing. Blanch small whole carrots 5 minutes, diced or sliced 2 minutes and lengthwise strips 2 minutes.



The duration is intended to be just long enough to stop the action of the enzymes and kill the bacteria.

Begin counting the blanching time as soon as you place the carrots in the boiling water. Cover the kettle and boil at a high temperature for the required length of time. You may use the same blanching water several times (up to 5). Be sure to add more hot water from the tap from time to time to keep the water level at the required height.

#### **Step 6 - Cool the carrots**

Cool carrots immediately in ice water. Drain the carrots thoroughly.



After vegetables are blanched, cool them quickly to prevent overcooking. Plunge the carrots into a large quantity of ice-cold water (I keep adding more ice to it). A good rule of thumb: Cool for the same amount of time as the blanch step. For instance, if you blanch sweet carrots for 7 minutes, then cool in ice water for 7 minutes.

Drain thoroughly.



## Step 7 - Bag the carrots

I love the FoodSavers ([see this page for more information](#)) with their vacuum sealing! I am not paid by them, but these things really work. If you don't have one, ziploc bags work, too, but it is hard to get as much air out of the bags. remove the air to prevent drying and 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.



## Step 8 - Done!

Pop them into the freezer, on the quick freeze shelf, if you have one!

**Tips:**



- Harvest the carrots at its peak maturity but not old - they get tough and fibrous; younger is better than older
- Process promptly after harvesting, or keep cooled in the fridge or with ice until then.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. I've frozen carrots but they seem so rubbery after being cooked. Any idea why?

Generally, that means the carrots were either old to begin with, or they were overcooked. It only takes 2 to 5 minutes to blanch the carrots, then plunge them immediately into ice water.

2. How long can they be frozen?

It depends upon how cold is your freezer and how you packed them. Colder (deep freezes) are better than frost free compartments, which actually cycle above freezing (that's how they melt the ice). Vacuum packing results in longer storage capability, too. Thicker bags also help prevent freezer burn.

In general, up to 9 months in a ziploc bag in an ordinary freezer, and 14 months in a deep freeze in a vacuum packed bag. After that, they carrots won't make you sick; they just won't taste as good.