

PickYourOwn.org

Where you can find a pick-your-own farm near you!

Click on the printer icon that looks like this:  (at the top left, to the right of "save a copy") to print!
See www.pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm for many other canning directions and recipes

How to Freeze Blueberries!

If you like blueberries in the winter, for blueberry pie ([see this page for a great recipe](#)), dessert, or just in a bowl; just imagine how good it would taste if you had picked a couple of quarts fresh or bought a them from a farm stand and then quickly froze them 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. Your own frozen blueberries will taste MUCH better than anything you've ever had from a store.

Directions for Freezing Blueberries

Ingredients

- fresh blueberries - any quantity

Equipment

- a pan or tray that will fit in your freezer
- a strainer or colander
- Vacuum food sealer or "ziploc" type freezer bags (the freezer bag version is heavier and protects better against freezer burn.

Instructions

Step 1 - Get yer berries!

Start with the freshest blueberries you can get. Look for plump, full berries with a good color. I've used blueberries as an example, but these directions would equally well for any other berry (blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, etc.) See the [picking tips page](#) for other berries.



Step 2 - Sort the blueberries.

Pick out and remove any bits of stems, leaves and soft or mushy blueberries. One peculiarity about blueberries that is different from other berries is, if you wash them before freezing, the skins become tough. I haven't found this to be a problem, since I use them to make blueberry pie and the cooking softens them, anyway. But if you plan to use them uncooked after thawing, you might wait to wash them until AFTER you thaw them. If you are going to cook them later, just put them in a big bowl of water to wash and help sort out the berries!

Step 3 - Drain the blueberries

If you washed the berries, now use a large sieve or colander to remove as much water as possible. I usually let them sit for about 10 minutes in the colander.



Step 4 - Spread the blueberries in a pan

there are two ways of doing this. If you have space in your freezer, spread the berries out in a large oven pan with a lip or ridge. Put enough on to make 1 layer. this way they will freeze quickly and not be frozen together in a lump, so later you can remove only what you need without thawing the rest.



If your freezer isn't that big, just drain as much of the water as you can, then put them into whatever container will fit in your freezer. After they are frozen, they may stick together a little bit, but should break apart fairly easily.



Step 5 - Put them in the freezer

Pop them into the coldest part of the freezer, or the quick freeze shelf, if your freezer has one!

I leave them in the freezer overnight, to get completely frozen.

Step 6 - bag the blueberries

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. On the left is the bag with frozen berries before vacuum sealing, and to the right is the same bag after vacuum sealing.

A tip for a low budget vacuum sealer:

To remove the excess air from a ziploc bag, put a straw inside the bag and zip it closed as far as possible. Then suck the air out of the bag, pinch the straw shut where it enters the bag and pull it from the bag and quickly zip the bag the rest of the way.



Step 7 - Label the bags!

Of course, you'll want to label them with the contents and date, or all this work could be wasted, if you can't identify them later, or don't know how old they are.

Step 8 - Done!

Pop them into the deep freeze, or in the coldest part of your regular freezer!



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!

Tips:

- Harvest early in the morning, especially if the weather is hot, to get peak flavor.
- Harvest the blueberries at its peak maturity, but not overripe and mushy.
- Process promptly after harvesting, or keep cooled in the fridge or with ice until then.