

CANNING & FREEZING APPLES, PEARS, STONE FRUITS

Read our canning and freezing basics. Wash fresh fruits with cool, clear tap water but do not soak them; drain. Follow preparation directions, below. If you choose to can or freeze fruits with syrup, select the syrup that best suits the fruit and your taste. Generally, heavier syrups are used with sour fruits, and lighter syrups are recommended for mild fruits. To prepare a syrup, place the following recommended amounts of sugar and water in a large saucepan (see below). Heat until the sugar dissolves. Skim off foam, if necessary. Use the syrup hot for canned fruits and chilled for frozen fruits. Allow 1/2 to 2/3 cup syrup for each 2 cups fruit

Food	Preparation	Boiling-Water Canning, Raw Pack	Boiling-Water Canning, Hot Pack	Freezing
Apples, Pears	Allow 2 to 3 pounds per quart. For apples, select varieties that are crisp, not mealy, in texture. Peel and core; halve, quarter, or slice. Dip into ascorbic acid color keeper solution; drain.	Not recommended.	Simmer in syrup for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Fill jars with fruit and syrup, leaving a 1/2-inch headspace.* For apples, process pints and quarts for 20 minutes. For pears, process pints for 20 minutes and quarts for 25 minutes.	Use a syrup, sugar, or unsweetened pack leaving the recommended headspace.*
Apricots, Nectarines, Peaches	Allow 2 to 3 pounds per quart. To peel peaches (peeling nectarines and apricots is not necessary), immerse in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds or until skins start to split; remove and plunge into cold water. Halve and pit. If desired, slice. Treat with ascorbic acid color keeper solution; drain.	Fill jars, placing fruit cut sides down. Add boiling syrup or water, leaving a 1/2-inch headspace.* Process pints for 25 minutes and quarts for 30 minutes. Do not raw-pack apricots. (Note: Hot packing generally results in a better product.)	Add fruit to hot syrup; bring to boiling. Fill jars with fruit (placing cut sides down) and syrup, leaving a 1/2-inch headspace.* Process pints for 20 minutes and quarts for 25 minutes.	Use a syrup, sugar, or water pack leaving the recommended headspace.*

Unsweetened or Dry Pack: Do not add sugar or liquid to the fruit; simply pack in a container. This is best for small whole fruits, such as berries.

Water Pack: Cover the fruit with water or unsweetened fruit juice. Do not use glass jars. Maintain the recommended headspace.

Sugar Pack: Place a small amount of fruit in the container and sprinkle lightly with sugar; repeat layering. Cover and let stand about 15 minutes or until juicy; seal.

Syrup Pack: Cover fruit with a syrup of sugar and water. For a very thin syrup, use 1 cup sugar and 4 cups water to yield about 4 cups syrup. For a thin syrup, use 1 2/3 cups sugar and 4 cups water to yield about 4 1/4 cups syrup. For a medium syrup, use 2 2/3 cups sugar and 4 cups water to yield about 4 2/3 cups syrup. For a heavy syrup, use 4 cups sugar and 4 cups water to yield about 5 3/4 cups syrup.

*CHECKING HEADSPACE

The space between the top of the food and the container rim is the headspace. Leaving the correct amount is essential.

CANNING: Headspace allows a vacuum to form and the jar to seal. Use a ruler to make sure you have the amount specified in each recipe.

FREEZING: Headspace provides room for food to expand as it freezes. When using unsweetened (dry) pack, leave a 1/2-inch headspace unless otherwise directed. When using water, sugar, or syrup pack in freezer containers with wide tops, leave a 1/2-inch headspace for pints and a 1-inch headspace for quarts. For narrow-top containers, don't fill above the "shoulder."