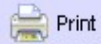


PICKYourOwn.org

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 Make Homemade Grape Juice - Easily!

Making and canning your own grape juice, muscadine juice, scuppernong juice or juice from other berries is quite easy. Here's how to do it, in 12 easy steps and completely illustrated. These directions work equally well for other types of juice: blueberry, raspberry, blackberry, boysenberry, dewberry, gooseberry, loganberry, tayberry, marionberry, youngberry, etc.; by themselves or mixed berry juice.

Ingredients and Equipment

- **Grapes** - Or muscadines, scuppernongs, or other berries. See step 2 for quantities.
- **Large spoons and ladles**
- **Sugar** - Optional - or other sweeteners - natural or artificial - it's your choice to use any or none.
- **Strainers** - a jelly strainer and/or cheesecloth are needed. A Foley food mill really speeds up the process and extracts more. see step 6 for pictures and
- **At least 1 large pot**; I prefer 16 to 20 quart Teflon lined pots for easy cleanup.
- **1 Water Bath Canner** (a huge pot to sterilize the jars after filling (about \$30 to \$35 at mall kitchen stores, sometimes at WalMart (seasonal item). Note: [we sell canners and supplies here, too - at excellent prices](#) - and it helps support this web site!
- **Ball jars** (Publix, WalMart carry then -

where to buy the strainers and food mill.

- **Jar grabber** (to pick up the hot jars)- WalMart carries it *sometimes* - or order it here. It's a tremendously useful to put cans in the canner and take the hot jars out (without scalding yourself!). The kit sold below has everything you need, and at a pretty good price:



about \$7 per dozen 8 ounce jars including the lids and rings)

- **Lids** - thin, flat, round metal lids with a gum binder that seals them against the top of the jar. They may only be used once.
- **Rings** - metal bands that secure the lids to the jars. They may be reused many times.

Optional stuff:

- **Jar funnel** (\$2 at WalMart, Target, and sometimes at grocery stores) or order it as part of the kit with the jar grabber.
- **Lid lifter** (has a magnet to pick the lids out of the boiling water where you sterilize them. (\$2 at WalMart or it comes in the kit at left)

Grape Juice-making Directions

This example shows you how to make grape juice, or juice from muscadines, scuppernongs and even berries, like raspberries, blueberries, etc..

Step 1 - Pick the grapes! (or buy them already picked)

It's fun to go pick your own and you can obviously get better quality ones! You can use Concord grapes, red grapes or other grapes, including muscadines and scuppernongs. And as I pointed out above, you can use other types of



berries, or mix them! Whichever you choose, you want flavorful grapes. Plain seedless white/green grapes, for example, have little flavor and make a bland juice. Most people choose Concord grapes or red grapes. Seedless or with seeds doesn't matter, as the strainer will remove them!

I prefer to grow my own; which is really easy - but that does take some space and time.

Above are grapes that I picked at a pick-your-own farm. If you want to pick your own, here is a list and links to the [pick your own farms](#).

Step 2 - How much fruit?

An average of 25 pounds of grapes is needed per canner load of 7 quarts of grape juice. Or to make 9 pints of juice, you'll need an average of 16 pounds of grapes. If you are buying in bulk, a "lug" weighs 26 pounds and yields 7 to 9 quarts of juice; which is an average of 3-1/2 pounds of grapes needed per quart of juice.

Step 3 - Wash the jars and lids

Now's a good time to get the jars ready, so you won't be rushed later. The dishwasher is fine for the jars, the water bath processing will sterilize them as well as the contents! If you don't have a dishwasher, you can wash the containers in hot, soapy water and rinse, then sterilize the jars by boiling them 10 minutes, and keep the jars in hot water until they are used.

NOTE: If unsterilized jars are used, the product should be processed for 5 more minutes. However, since this additional processing can result in a poor set (runny juice), it's better to sterilize the jars.

Put the lids into a pan of boiling water for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" to pull them out.



Leave the jars in the dishwasher on "heated dry" until you are ready to use them. Keeping them hot will prevent the jars from breaking when you fill them with the hot juice.



Step 3 - Wash the grapes!

I'm sure you can figure out how to wash the grapes in a large bowl under running plain cold water.

Remove the grapes from the stems and pick out any stems and leaves that became mixed in!

Step 4 - Crush or chop the grapes (optional)

You can cook the grapes with out first chopping or crushing them, but I find it speeds up the process. It's up to you! A simple potato masher (far right) works fine, or a food processor (below)



Step 5 - Heat the grapes on the stove

Put the grapes in a pot and add enough water to just cover the grapes. Put the crushed grapes in a big pot on the stove over medium to high heat (stir often enough to prevent burning) for until it starts to boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. We just want to soften the skins to help release the juice and break down some of the fruit to help it pass through our juice strainer.



Step 6 - Sieve the cooked grapes



You can either put the soft cooked grapes through a juice strainer (about \$9.00, see ordering at right) which results in the most clear juice and is easiest to use, or pour them through cheesecloth in a colander. Or if you don't mind chunky juice, just let the juice stand for 20 minutes, and decant (pour off) the clear liquid to use and leave the solids behind.

You may also want to run the crushed cooked grapes through a Foley food mill ([about \\$20 - see this page](#)) BEFORE the juice strainer - it helps to extract **more** juice and jet out the large skins that will clog the strainer. It's not necessary, but helps you get the most out of

the grapes.

If you need a stopping point and want to finish up the next day, this is a good place. Sometimes, juice gets crystals, called tartrate crystals, forming in the juice.

They're not harmful and don't affect the taste, but some people don't like the appearance. I rarely even see them! But if you do, let juice stand in the fridge overnight,

then strain through two thicknesses of damp cheesecloth to remove any crystals that have formed.



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

There is also a VERY nice, versatile strainer pictured at far right! Click on the links there or see the bottom of this page for more information and to order! The VillaWare model can handle higher volumes than a Foley food mill (without giving you cramps!)

To see a greater variety of [strainers in other types, sizes, and prices, click here!](#)

Step 7 - Polishing and further filtering

If you read the USDA's guide, they have additional steps to polish the juice so it is crystal clear. I don't bother with these as it adds a day or two to the process and most people like the natural look, anyway!

But if you do want the polished look, here what to do:

- Refrigerate juice from step 6 for 24 to 48 hours.
- Without mixing, shaking or disturbing it, carefully pour off clear liquid and save; discard the sediment.
- If desired, you may now strain through a paper coffee filter for a clearer juice.
- Continue to step 8.

Step 8 - Get the lids sterilizing

If you didn't do so already, put the lids into a pan of hot water for at least several minutes; to soften up the gummed surface and clean the lids.



Need lids, rings and replacement jars?

[Get them all here, delivered direct to your home, at the best prices on the internet!](#)



Step 9 - Sweeten (if desired) and bring to a boil



I find that homemade grape juice, made using sweet fresh grapes, rarely needs any additional sweetness. However if you have a sweet tooth or are using very tart grapes, this is the time to add your sweetener (sugar, Splenda, honey, etc.).

Bring the juice to a boil.

Step 10 - Fill the jars and put the lid and rings on

Fill them to within 1/4 inch of the top, wipe any spilled juice off the top, seat the lid and tighten the ring around them. Then put them into the boiling water canner!

This is where the jar tongs come in really handy!



Step 11 - Process the jars in the boiling water bath



Keep the jars covered with at least 1 inch of water. Keep the water boiling.

See the table below for the length of time to process the jars recommended for your altitude and size of jars used.

Recommended process time for Grape Juice in a boiling-water canner.			
		Process Time at Altitudes of	
Jar Size	0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Pints or Quart jars	5 min	10 minutes	15 minutes
Half-Gallon jars	10min	15 minutes	20 minutes



Step 12 - Remove and cool the jars - Done!

Lift the jars out of the water with your jar lifter tongs and let them cool without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight) You can then remove the rings if you like.

Once cooled, they're ready to store. I find they last up to 12 months if kept in a cool dark place, like a basement..