

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 Reduced Sodium, No Sugar Kosher Dill Pickles - Easily! With Step-by-step Directions, Photos, Ingredients, Recipe s

Yield: 6 quart jars

Making and canning your own reduced sodium low calorie kosher dill pickles is one of the easiest things you can do with your cucumbers! If you are on a restricted salt diet, this is the recipe for you. Here's how to do it, in easy steps and completely illustrated. It is much faster than the old method your grandmother used with tons of pickling salt and de-scumming the brine! Ugh! This method is so easy, ANYONE can do this! It's a great thing to do with your kids!

The only downside to low-salt pickles is the salt brining process typically adds crispness. So, the way around this is to make these as refrigerator pickles. Instead of processing them in the canner, just pop them into the fridge.

I've added [free labels for your jars here](#), in a Word format! Just download, edit, and print in label paper.

Ingredients

- **Cucumbers** - 4 or 5 lbs of fresh, crisp pickling cucumbers - not wilted, soft or overripe!
- **Sweetener - OPTIONAL** -sweetener does not provide preserving capability in this recipe - 1 cups -of Stevia (in a prepared form like Truvia, it measures same as sugar; if you use another form, you'll need do your own conversion) - or Splenda, if you prefer)
- **Pickling salt** - 2 tablespoons - (available at most grocery stores)
- **2 tbsp whole mixed "pickling spice"** (again, it's available from Kroger, Publix, local "big box" stores and large grocery stores). This is NOT a Mrs Wages or Ball packet, it is natural pickling spices, just pre-mixed.
- **7 heads of fresh dill** (1 head per pint jar) or, if you can't get fresh dill (it's SO easy to grow, plant it next to your cucumbers) just use 2 tbsp dill seed per pint jar.
- **7 teaspoons dill seed**
- **3 clove purred garlic** (about a 1/2 teaspoon),
- **1 teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- **Cheesecloth or a spice bag**, or even a small piece of a old, but clean cotton shirt - to hold the spices
- **Clear vinegar** - 6 cups of 5% vinegar, apple cider vinegar works well. Store brand is about \$1.25 for a 64 oz bottle.



Equipment

- **Jar grabber** (to pick up the hot jars)
- **Lid lifter** (has a magnet to pick the lids out of the boiling water where you sanitize them. (\$2 at Target, other big box stores, and often grocery stores; and available online - see this page)
- **Large spoons and ladles**
- **Jar funnel** (\$2 at Target, other big box stores, and often grocery stores; and available online - see this page)
- **1 large pot**; teflon lined, glass or ceramic.
- **1 Canner** (a huge pot to sanitize the jars after filling (about \$30 to \$35 at mall kitchen stores, sometimes at big box stores and grocery stores.). Note: we sell many sizes and types of canners for all types of stoves and needs - see [canning supplies](#))
- **Pint canning jars** (Ball or Kerr jars can be found at grocery stores, like Safeway, Publix, Kroger, grocery stores, even online - about \$9 per dozen jars including the lids and rings). Be sure to get wide mouth jars to fit the pickles in! Pint size works best!
- **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.
- [See this page for pickling supplies, equipment, books, crocks and additives](#). If you want to [make your own seasoning see this page!](#)

Directions - How to Make Pickles

Step 1 - Selecting the cucumbers

It's fun to go pick your own and you can obviously get better quality cucumbers!

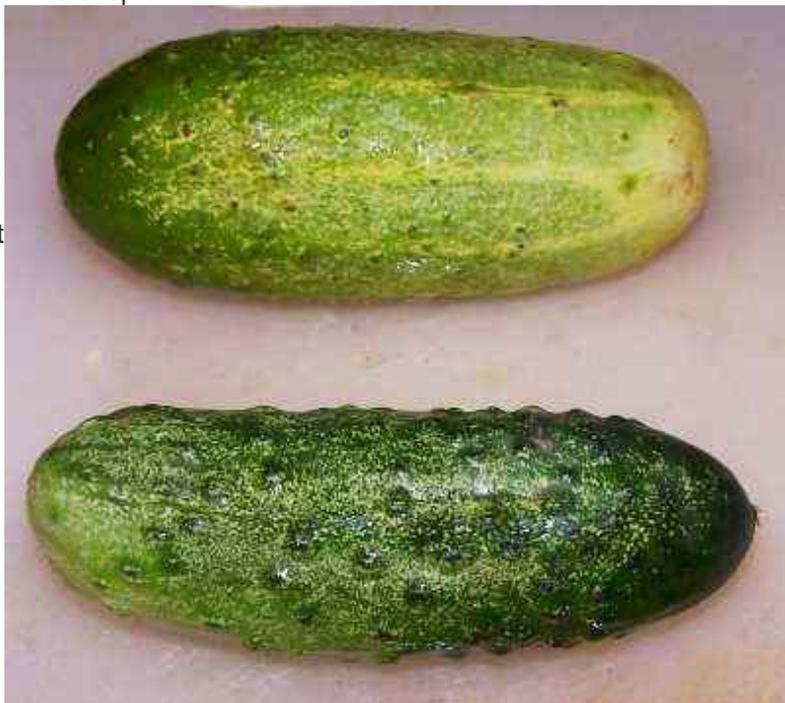
At right is a picture of cucumbers from my garden - they are SO easy to grow. But be sure to grow the varieties that are labeled "pickling cucumbers" - they will be much more crisp!

The picture at right shows a good cucumber for pickling (bottom) and a bad one (top). The good one is dark green, firm, and not bloated. It has lots of warts!

The bad one is overripe, it has yellow or white areas in the skin, and the warts are almost all gone. If you cut it open, you will see developed seeds. You don't want seeds!

For cucumber pickles, use cucumbers intended for pickling that are no more than 2 inches in diameter. Start with crisp raw vegetable varieties to get crisp pickled vegetables.

The most important factor in getting crisp pickled vegetables is to start with fresh, just-picked vegetables. Overripe cucumbers make mushy pickles. Vegetables become soft as their pectin structure changes due to microbial activity, excess heat or improper handling. As each day passes, vegetables lose crispness. Once a vegetable is soft it cannot be made firm again.



Step 2 - How many cucumbers?

It takes about 3 or 4 cucumbers to fill a pint jar. Each cucumber is about 4 - 5 inches long and you will cut off the ends so they will fit with 1/4-inch to spare..

Step 3 -Wash and cut the vegetables!

I'm sure you can figure out how to wash the fruit in plain cold water.

You will need to cut the ends off (about 1/4-inch, the blossom harbors microbes that can cause softening) and then slice them lengthwise if you like spears.

You can also leave them whole or cut them cross-wise for bread-and-butter pickles.



Set them aside for use in step 8.

Step 4 - Get the jars and lids sanitizing

The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sanitize" cycle. I get that going while I'm preparing everything else, so it's done by the time I'm ready to fill the jars. If you don't have a dishwasher, submerge the jars in a large pot (the canner itself) of water and bring it to a boil.

Be sure to let it go through the rinse cycle to get rid of any soap!

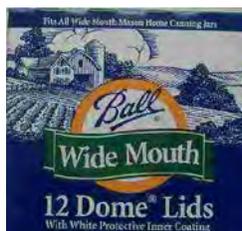
Get the canner heating up

Fill the canner about 1/2 full of water and start it heating (with the lid on).



Start the water for the lids

Put the lids into the small pot of boiling water for at least several minutes. Note: everything gets sanitized in the water bath (step 7) anyway, so this just helps to ensure there is no spoilage later!)



Step 5 - Mix the salt, water and vinegar in a pot and bring to a boil

Combine the

- **Sweetener - OPTIONAL** - the sweetener does not provide preserving capability in this recipe - 1 cups -of Stevia (in a prepared form like Truvia, it measures same as sugar; if you use another form, you'll need do your own conversion) - or Splenda, if you prefer)
- **Pickling salt** - 2 tablespoons - (available at most grocery stores)
- **2 tbsp whole mixed "pickling spice"** (again, it's available from Kroger, Publix, local "big box" stores and large grocery stores). This is NOT a Mrs Wages or Ball packet, it is natural pickling spices, just pre-mixed.
- **7 heads of fresh dill** (about 1 head per pint jar) or, if you can't get fresh dill (it's SO easy to grow, plant it ne
- **Clear vinegar** - 6 cups of 5% vinegar, apple cider vinegar works well. Store brand is about \$1.25 for a 64 oz bottle



in a pot and bring to a boil. Be sure to use a NON-metal pot - or a coated metal (teflon, silverstone, enamel, etc.) without breaks in the coating. the metal reacts with the vinegar and makes the pickle solution turn cloudy.

Note: If more brine is needed, mix in same proportion. If brine is too tart, add sugar. Do not add water

Step 6 - Pack the sliced cucumbers into the jars

Pack cucumbers into the clean quart canning jars. For extra flavor and appearances, to each jar, add

- **1 small heads fresh dill,**
- **1 teaspoon dill seed,**
- **1/2 clove purred garlic (about a 1/2 teaspoon), and**
- **1/8 teaspoon red pepper.**



Step 7 - Fill the jars with cucumbers and put the lid and rings on

Pour boiling solution of vinegar and spices over cucumbers in sterile jars, leaving 1/2 inch headspace.

Seat the lid and hand-tighten the ring around them.

Step 8 - Boil the jars in the canner

Or just put them in the fridge and they will keep for months. To can them as shelf-stable jars, put them in the canner and keep them covered with at least 1 inch of water. Keep the water boiling. Once the water returns to a boil, boil the jars for 15 minutes.

Canning processing times

Type of pickling method	Jar size	0 to 1,000 ft above sea level	1,001 to 6,000 ft above sea level
Quick process, (raw cucumbers put in the jar, hot liquid poured over them)-	pint	15 min	20 min

Step 9 - Done

After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Lift the jars out of the water 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, but if you leave them on, at least loosen them quite a bit, so they don't rust in place due to trapped moisture. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok.

When can you start eating the pickles? Well, it takes some time for the seasonings to be absorbed into the pickles. Pickles should be ready to eat in 6 weeks or so.



Reference: [University of Oregon Extension Service](#)

Pickle Making Problems?

[See this page for a more complete set of frequently asked pickling questions and answers](#)

Other Equipment:

From left to right:

1. Jar lifting tongs
to pick up hot jars
2. Lid lifter
- to remove lids from the pot
of boiling water (sterilizing)
3. Lid
- disposable - you may only
use them once
4. Ring
- holds the lids on the jar until after
the jars cool - then you don't need them
5. Canning jar funnel
- to fill the jars



You can get all of the tools in a kit here:

Summary - Cost of Making Homemade Pickles - makes 6 pint jars, 16 oz each*

Item	Quantity	Cost in 2020	Source	Subtotal
Cucumbers	4 lbs - about 3 or 4 per pint jar)	free from the garden, or \$3.00 at a PYO	Pick your own	\$3.00
Canning jars (pint size, wide mouth), includes lids and rings	6 pint jars	\$7.00/dozen	Grocery stores (Publix, Kroger, Safeway, etc.)	\$3.50
Vinegar	6 cups	\$1.50	Safeway, Publix, Kroger, grocery stores	\$1.50
Sugar	2 cups	\$4.00 per 5 lb bag	Safeway, Publix, Kroger, grocery stores	\$1.00
Dill	6 heads	free or \$2.00	Your garden or grocery store	\$2.00
Pickle spice	2 tablespoons	\$3.00 per package	Grocery stores (Publix, Kroger, Safeway,	\$0.50

			etc.)
Total			\$11.00 total or maximum of \$1.83 per jar INCLUDING the jars - which you can reuse!
<p>* - This assumes you already have the pots, pans, ladles, and reusable equipment. Note that you can reuse the jars! Many products are sold in jars that will take the lids and rings for canning. For example, Classico Spaghetti sauce is in quart sized jars that work with Ball and Kerr lids and rings. Note that the Classico's manufacturer does not recommend reuse of their jars: see what they have to say on this page:</p>			

How to make other pickles - recipes and instructions:

- [Refrigerator pickles \(no canning required\)](#)
- [Cucumber pickle relish](#)
- [Pickled beets](#)
- [Pickled green beans](#)
- [Pickled dilled okra](#)
-

• Home Canning Kits

- This is the same type of standard canner that my grandmother used to make everything from applesauce to jams and jellies to tomato and spaghetti sauce. This complete kit includes everything you need and lasts for years: the canner, jar rack, jar grabber tongs, lid lifting wand, a plastic funnel, labels, bubble freer, and the bible of canning, the Ball Blue Book. It's much cheaper than buying the items separately. You'll never need anything else except jars & lids (and the jars are reusable)! There is also a simple kit with just the canner and rack, and a pressure canner, if you want to do vegetables (other than tomatoes). To see [more canners, of different styles, makes and prices, click here!](#)

