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How to Make Home and Can Roasted Tomatoes - Easily!

Making and canning your own roasted tomatoes is easy using this standard Ball/USDA recipe and processing times, just roasting the tomatoes first.

This version uses an ordinary boiling water bath canner, [see this page for the pressure canner version](#).

So, here's how to can roasted tomatoes. The directions are complete with instructions in easy steps and illustrated. In the winter when you open a jar, the roasted tomatoes will taste MUCH better than any store-bought canned roasted tomatoes.

Prepared this way, the jars have a shelf life of about 12 months, and aside from storing in a cool, dark place, require no special attention.

Ingredients

- **Tomatoes** - You can use almost any quantity, to make 1 jar or more. An average of 21 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 13 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 53 pounds and yields 15 to 21 quarts-an average of 3 pounds per quart.
- **Lemon juice** - bottled lemon juice (2 tablespoons per quart jar)

Equipment

- **1 Water bath Canner** (a huge pot to sanitize the jars after filling (about \$30 to \$35 - \$30 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores. Note: we sell many sizes and types of canners for all types of stoves and needs -

see [canning supplies](#)). Tomatoes are on the border between the high-acid fruits that can be preserved in a boiling-water bath and the low-acid fruits, vegetables and meats that need pressure canning

- Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
- Jar funnel (\$2 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates)
- At least 1 large pot
- Large spoons and ladles
- Ball jars (Publix, Kroger, other grocery stores and some "big box" stores carry them - about \$8 per dozen quart jars including the lids and rings)

Directions - Step by Step

Step 1 - Selecting the tomatoes

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

Wash, remove stems, and trim off bruised or discolored portions of the tomatoes. Generally, you'll need about 2 quarts of raw tomatoes to make 1 quart of chopped, peeled tomatoes, and each quarts of the prepared tomatoes makes about 1 pint of soup. A bushel of tomatoes weighs 53 pounds.



At right is a picture of tomatoes from my garden - they are so much better than anything from the grocery store. And if you don't have enough, a pick-you-own farm is the place to go! At right are 4 common varieties that will work:

Top left: Beefsteak
Bottom left: Roma,
paste-type

Top right: Lemon
Boy, yellow
Bottom right:
Better Boy

The picture at right shows the best variety of tomato to use: Roma; also called paste tomatoes. They have fewer sides, thicker, meatier walls, and less water. And that means thicker sauce in less cooking time!

Also, you don't want mushy, bruised or rotten tomatoes!

Caution: Do not can tomatoes from dead or frost-killed vines. Green tomatoes are more acidic than ripened fruit and can be canned safely, also.



Step 2 - Wash the tomatoes and cut in half

Just wash them in cold water, and cut them in half, through the stem and bottom.

Step 3 - Prepare the jars, oven and pressure canner



Get the oven heating to 450 F (220 C) Wash the jars and lids

This is a good time to get the jars ready! The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sanitize" cycle. Otherwise put the jars in boiling water for

10 minutes. I just put the lids in a small pot of almost boiling water for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" (available from target, other big box stores, and often grocery stores; and available online - see this page) to pull them out.

Get a large pot of water boiling

We will use this water to pour over the beans and fill each jar with liquid, after we've packed them full of beans. I use the largest pot I have, so that there is plenty of clean, boiling water ready when I need it.



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

Get the canner heating up



Step 4 - Put the tomatoes in the roasting pan

Arrange the tomato halves face down in a roasting pan. You ought to be able to fit about 5 pounds in a large roasting pan. If you like, you may sprinkle each pan with 1 tablespoon of dried, crushed herbs (typically rosemary, thyme and/or basil)

Step 5 - Roast the tomatoes

Roast the tomatoes at 450°F for about half an hour. Alternatively, you may cook them run them under the broiler for 3 to 5 minutes. Either way, cook them until they're wrinkled with only a few black spots.

Step 6 - Add lemon juice to each jar

Add two tablespoons of bottled lemon juice or 1/2 teaspoon of citric acid to each empty quart jar. For pints, use one tablespoon bottled lemon juice or 1/4 teaspoon citric acid. Acid can be added directly to the jars before filling with product. You can add 2 tablespoons of sugar to each quart jar (1 to each pint) to offset acid taste, if desired. Four tablespoons of a 5 percent acidity vinegar per quart may be used instead of lemon juice or citric acid. However, vinegar may cause undesirable flavor changes.. Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart to the jars, if desired (I don't add any salt).



Step 7 - Fill the jars with the tomatoes

Fill jars with the roasted tomatoes, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Press the tomatoes in the jars until spaces between them fill with juice. Leave 1/2-inch headspace.

Step 8 - Put the lids and rings on

Put the lids on each jar and seal them by putting a ring on and screwing it down snugly (but not with all your might, just "snug").

Step 9 - Boil the jars in the water bath canner

Put them in the canner and keep them covered with at least 1 to 2 inches of water. Keep the water boiling. Process the jars in a boiling-water bath for 85 minutes for pints and quart jars. Remember to adjust the time if you are at a different altitude other than sea level! Pressure canners work better for tomatoes and other low acid foods - you'll get less spoilage with a pressure canner.

I prefer a pressure canner as the higher temperatures and shorter cooking time result in better flavor and less spoilage. For more information or to order one, click on [Pressure Canners](#). The recipe and directions for [pressure canning tomatoes are here](#).

Recommended Process Time for **Whole or Halved Tomatoes (packed raw without added liquid)** in a Boiling-Water Canner

		Process Time at Altitudes of			
Style of Pack	Jar Size	0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 3,000 ft	3,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Pints or Quarts	85 min	90	95	100

Step 10 - Done



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. 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. Don't worry if you see the tomatoes floating above a layer of liquid; that's normal. tomatoes have a lot of water in them and it separates a bit. If I had packed the tomatoes in the jars a bit tighter or squeezed for of the free liquid out of them before packing them in the jars, the water layer would be reduced.