

# Canning and Preserving 101

This playbook outlines the basic steps involved in canning and preserving different types of foods, such as jams and pickles, enabling individuals to enjoy seasonal produce all year round.

## Step 1: **Gather Equipment**

Collect all necessary canning equipment including jars, lids, bands, a canner or large pot, jar lifters, a funnel, a ladle, and a bubble remover/headspace tool.

## Step 2: **Prepare Jars**

Wash jars and lids in soapy water and rinse. Sterilize jars by boiling them for 10 minutes and keep them hot until they are ready to be filled.

## Step 3: **Prepare Recipe**

Follow a tested and trusted recipe to prepare the food you want to can, whether it's making jam, pickling vegetables, or another preserving technique.

## Step 4: **Fill Jars**

Using a funnel and ladle, fill jars with the prepared food. Remove air bubbles by running a bubble remover tool around the inside edge. Ensure proper headspace as specified by the recipe.

## Step 5: **Seal Jars**

Wipe the rims of the jars with a clean cloth. Center lids on the jars and apply bands until fit is fingertip tight. Do not overtighten.

## Step 6: **Process Jars**

Place filled jars into the canner or pot with simmering water. Make sure jars are covered by at least 1 inch of water. Process for the time specified in the recipe.

## Step 7: **Cool Down**

After processing, turn off heat and remove the canner lid. Let jars sit for 5 minutes in the canner before removing them with jar lifters. Place jars on a towel and let cool for 12-24 hours.

## Step 8: **Check Seals**

Check that all jars have sealed properly. The lids should not flex up and down when the center is pressed. Any jars that have not sealed should be refrigerated and consumed within a week.

## Step 9: **Store**

Label sealed jars with the contents and canning date. Store in a cool, dark place. Wait a few weeks before opening for flavors to develop, particularly for pickles and ferments.

# **General Notes**

## **Safety First**

Always follow a reliable recipe, especially when canning low-acid foods to prevent the risk of botulism. Use proper canning techniques to ensure food safety.

## **Quality Ingredients**

Use fresh, high-quality produce free from blemishes and spoilage. The quality of the preserved food cannot improve upon the initial quality of the ingredients used.

## **Altitude Adjustments**

Adjust processing times and temperatures based on your altitude. Be sure to look up the necessary adjustments for your specific location as this can affect the safety of your canned goods.