

Pressure Canning for Dummies

For anyone who has never pressure canned before I am providing a photo documentation of the process. It is a very simple process, and can be successfully accomplished by anyone with the right equipment. Hopefully this will let beginners see how easy it really is, before they make the investment. There are detailed directions and pressure-time charts that come with a pressure canner.



You need some basic equipment for canning. I would recommend you invest in a canning funnel, Jar Lifter, plastic bubble probe, and a large dipper. I purchased a Presto 23-Qt Pressure Canner for \$77. It can pressure can 20 pint jars in one load. Smaller canners are available for less. Remember, a pressure canner is also a pressure cooker, and it can double as a hot-water bath canner too. I use the pressure canner to cook meals when I'm rushed for time. It can reduce cooking time by up to 75% in many cases.

The first step is to wash and trim the ends from the beans, and cut them into the desired lengths. I prefer lengths of about 1-1/2". Since I am pressure canning, there is no reason to pre-cook the beans.



Sterilize the jars and lids in boiling water, and then pack the jars with the cut beans.



Next, fill the jars containing the beans with boiling water up to about 1/2" to 1" from the top rim. Once the beans and hot water are in the jar, use a plastic probe to release any air bubbles that are trapped inside.



Finally place the lid on the jar and screw on the ring, tightening by hand. Now use the jar lifter to lower the cans into the pressure canner. With pressure canning, the water does not have to cover the jars completely. I try to fill the cooker up to about 2" from the top with boiling water.



Finally lock the cover on the pressure cooker, and turn the burner on high. When the pressure reaches 11 pounds, turn down the heat and maintain 11 pounds for 20 minutes (for beans). After 20 minutes turn off the heat and let the pressure slowly reduce to zero before opening.

TIME & PRESSURE FOR PINTS

Beans = 20 min @ 11psi
Carrots = 25 min. @ 11psi
Beets = 30 min. @ 11psi
Corn = 55 min. @ 11psi

IMPORTANT: Wait for the pressure to lower on its own!! Absolutely do not remove the cover, or bleed off the pressure with the release valve. All the liquid will be drawn out of your jars and you could be seriously burned from steam. The water and steam inside are at 240 degrees F. The other thing I would emphasize is NOT to preserve beans or non-acidic vegetables with a water bath canner. Bacteria produces a spore that makes a poisonous toxin which causes botulism. The bacteria will survive in Low-Acid foods, and this spore is not destroyed at 212° F (boiling point). Low-acid foods need to be processed at 240° F. This temperature can only be achieved with a pressure canner.

Happy Pressure Canning....