

Pickled Cucumbers

Bread-&-Butter Pickles

Ingredients:

6 pounds of 4- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
8 cups thinly sliced onions (about 3 pounds)
½ cup canning or pickling salt
4 cups vinegar (5 percent)
4½ cups sugar
2 tablespoons mustard seed
1½ tablespoons celery seed
1 tablespoon ground turmeric
1 cup pickling lime (optional — for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 8 pints

Preparation: Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut into $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch slices. Combine cucumbers and onions in a large bowl. Add salt. Cover with 2 inches crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate three to four hours, adding more ice as needed.

Preparation Variation for Firmer Pickles: Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut into $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch slices. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and ½ cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock, glass or enamelware container. CAUTION: Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution. Soak cucumber slices in lime water for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution, rinse and resoak one hour in fresh, cold water. Repeat the rinsing and soaking steps twice more. Handle carefully, as slices will be brittle. Drain well.

To Make Pickles: Add sugar and remaining ingredients in a large pot. Boil 10 minutes. Add well-drained cucumbers and onions and slowly reheat to boiling. Fill jars with slices and cooking syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process

pints or quarts for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath, or use low-temperature pasteurization treatment explained at the end of this fact sheet.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored four to five weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Squash Variation: Substitute slender (1 to 1½-inches in diameter) zucchini or yellow summer squash for cucumbers.

Quick Fresh-Pack Dill Pickles

Ingredients:

8 pounds of 3- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers
2 gallons water
1¼ cups canning or pickling salt (divided)
1½ quarts vinegar (5 percent)
¼ cup sugar
2 quarts water
2 tablespoons whole mixed pickling spice
3 tablespoons whole mustard seed
About 14 heads of fresh dill OR 5 tablespoons dill seed

Yield: 7 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Dissolve $\frac{3}{4}$ cup salt in 2 gallons water. Pour over cucumbers and let stand 12 hours. Drain. Combine vinegar, ½ cup salt, sugar and 2 quarts water. Add mixed pickling spices tied in a clean, white cloth. Heat to boiling. Fill jars with cucumbers. Add 1 teaspoon mustard seed and 1½ heads fresh dill (or 1½ teaspoons dill seed) per pint jar. Cover with boiling pickling solution, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process pints for 10 minutes or quarts for 15 minutes in a boiling water bath, or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment explained on the last page.

Quick Sweet Pickles

May be canned as either strips or slices.

Ingredients:

8 pounds of 3- to 4-inch pickling cucumbers
1/3 cup canning or pickling salt
4½ cups sugar
3½ cups vinegar (5 percent)
2 teaspoons celery seed
1 tablespoon whole allspice
2 tablespoons mustard seed
1 cup pickling lime (optional - for use in variation below for making firmer pickles)

Yield: About 7 to 9 pints

Preparation: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Slice or cut in strips. Place in bowl and sprinkle with ½ cup salt. Cover with 2 inches of crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate three to four hours. Add more ice as needed. Drain well.

Preparation Variation for Firmer Pickles: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Slice or cut cucumbers into strips. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and ½ cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock, glass or enamelware container. CAUTION: Avoid inhaling lime dust while mixing the lime-water solution. Soak cucumber slices or strips in lime water solution for 12 to 24 hours, stirring occasionally. Remove from lime solution and rinse and resoak one hour in fresh, cold water. Repeat the rinsing and resoaking twice more. Handle carefully because slices or strips will be brittle. Drain well.

To Make Pickles: Combine sugar, vinegar, celery seed, allspice and mustard seed in 6-quart kettle. Heat to boiling.

Hot Pack: Add drained cucumbers and heat until just hot. Fill sterile jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process pints or quarts in a boiling water bath for 5 minutes or use the low temperature pasteurization treatment.

Raw Pack: Fill jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Add hot pickling syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes for pints or 15 minutes for quarts, or use the low

temperature pasteurization treatment explained at the end of this fact sheet.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored four to five weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Variation: Add two slices of raw whole onion to each jar before filling with cucumbers.

Sweet Gherkin Pickles

Ingredients:

7 pounds cucumbers (1½ inch or less)
½ cup canning or pickling salt
8 cups sugar
6 cups vinegar (5 percent)
¾ teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons celery seeds
2 teaspoons whole mixed pickling spice
2 cinnamon sticks
½ teaspoons fennel (optional)
2 teaspoons vanilla (optional)

Yield: 6 to 7 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Place cucumbers in large container and cover with boiling water. Six to 8 hours later, and again on the second day, drain and cover with 6 quarts of fresh boiling water containing ¼ cup salt.

On the third day, drain and prick cucumbers with a table fork. Combine and bring to boil 3 cups vinegar, 3 cups sugar, turmeric and spices. Pour over cucumbers. Six to 8 hours later, drain the pickling syrup into a saucepan. Add 2 cups each of sugar and vinegar to the syrup and reheat to boil. Pour over pickles.

On the fourth day, drain the syrup into a saucepan. Add another 2 cups sugar and 1 cup vinegar. Heat to boiling and pour over pickles. Six to 8 hours later, drain the pickling syrup into a saucepan. Add 1 cup sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla to syrup and heat to boiling. Fill hot, sterile pint jars with pickles and cover with hot syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process for five minutes in a boiling water bath or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment explained at the end of this fact sheet.

14-Day Sweet Pickles

Process whole, in strips or slices

Ingredients:

4 pounds of 2- to 5-inch pickling cucumbers (if packed whole, use cucumbers of uniform size)
¾ cup canning or pickling salt (separated — ¼ cup on each of the first, third and fifth days)
2 teaspoons celery seed
2 tablespoons mixed pickling spices
5½ cups sugar
4 cups vinegar (5 percent)

Yield: About 5 to 9 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard, but leave ¼ inch of stem attached. Place whole cucumbers in suitable 1-gallon container. Add ¼ cup canning or pickling salt to 2 quarts water and bring to a boil. Pour over cucumbers. Add suitable cover and weight. Place clean towel over container and keep the temperature at about 70 °F.

On the Third and Fifth Days: Drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers. If any scum has formed, remove it and scald the weight. Return cucumbers to container. Add ¼ cup salt to 2 quarts fresh water in a saucepan and boil. Pour over cucumbers, add cover and weight, and re-cover with clean towel.

On the Seventh Day: Drain salt water and discard. Rinse cucumbers and scald containers, cover and weight. Slice or strip cucumbers, if desired, and return to container. Place celery seed and pickling spices in small cheesecloth bag. Combine 2 cups sugar and 4 cups vinegar in a saucepan. Add spice bag; bring to a boil and pour pickling solution over cucumbers. Add cover and weight and clean towel.

On Each of the Next Six Days: Drain syrup into a saucepan. Remove spice bag and place in syrup. Add ½ cup sugar to syrup and bring to a boil. Remove cucumbers and rinse. Scald container, cover and weight daily. Return cucumbers to container; add boiled syrup, spice bag, cover and weight. Re-cover with clean towel.

On the 14th Day: Drain syrup into saucepan. Fill sterile pint jars or clean quart jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Add ½ cup sugar to syrup and bring to

boil. Remove spice bag. Pour hot syrup over cucumbers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process pint jars for five minutes or quart jars for 10 minutes in boiling water bath or use the low-temperature pasteurization treatment.

Quick Sour Pickles

About 25 cucumbers, medium-sized
½ gallon cider vinegar
2 cups water
½ cup salt
½ cup sugar
½ cup mustard seed

Wash cucumbers. Remove 1/16-inch slice from blossom ends and discard. Slice cucumbers lengthwise. Pack into hot jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Mix vinegar, water, salt, sugar and mustard seed and bring to a boil. Fill jar to ½ inch from top with boiling hot liquid. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids. Process 10 minutes in a boiling water bath.

Yield: About 8 pints

Reduced-Sodium Dill Pickles

4 pounds (3- to 5-inch) cucumbers, sliced
6 cups vinegar
6 cups sugar
2 tablespoons canning salt
1½ teaspoons celery seed
1½ teaspoons mustard seed
2 large onions, thinly sliced
8 heads fresh dill

Yield: About 8 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut cucumbers in ¼-inch slices. Combine vinegar, sugar, salt, celery and mustard seeds in large saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil. Place two slices of onions and half a dill head in each pint jar. Fill jars with cucumber slices, leaving ½-inch headspace. Add a slice of onion and half a dill head on top. Pour hot pickling solution over cucumbers, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids. Process pints for 15 minutes in boiling water bath.

Reduced-Sodium Sweet Pickles

4 pounds (3- to 4-inch) cucumbers, sliced

Brining Solution:

1 quart distilled white vinegar
1 tablespoon canning salt
1 tablespoon mustard seed
½ cup sugar

Canning Syrup:

12/3 cups distilled white vinegar
3 cups sugar
1 tablespoon whole allspice
2¼ teaspoon celery seed

Yield: About 4 to 5 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers and cut 1/16-inch slices off blossom ends and discard. Cut cucumbers into ¼-inch slices. In a large saucepot, mix the ingredients for the brining solution. Add the cut cucumbers, cover and simmer until the cucumbers change color from bright to dull green (about 5 to 7 minutes). At the same time, mix canning syrup ingredients in a saucepan. Bring syrup to a boil. Drain the cucumber slices. Pack cucumbers in jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Fill jars to ½ inch from top with hot canning syrup. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids. Process pints for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath.

Low-Temperature Pasteurization Treatment

The following treatment results in a better product texture but must be carefully managed to avoid possible spoilage. Place jars in a canner filled half-way with warm (120 to 140 °F) water. Then, add hot water to a level 1 inch above jars. Heat the water enough to maintain 180 to 185 °F water temperature for 30 minutes. Check with a candy or jelly thermometer to be certain that the water temperature is at least 180 °F during the entire 30

minutes. Temperatures higher than 185 °F may cause unnecessary softening of pickles.

Caution: Use this treatment only when recipe indicates. Do not use on reduced-sodium pickles.

Altitude Adjustments

The processing times given in these recipes are for altitudes of 0 to 1000 feet. Most areas in South Carolina will fall within these altitudes, but for those living at altitudes between 1000 and 2000 feet, add five minutes to each processing time.

For more information on canning pickles, request [HGIC 3100, *Pickle Basics*](#); [HGIC 3101, *Common Pickle Problems*](#); or [HGIC 3040, *Canning Foods at Home*](#); or contact your county Extension agent.

Sources:

1. USDA (1994). *Complete Guide to Home Canning*. Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539.
2. Reynolds, Susan and Paulette Williams. *So Easy to Preserve*. Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia; Revised by Elizabeth Address and Judy Harrison, 2006.

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