

STORE
THIS,
NOT
THAT!

DRY IT... YOU'LL LIKE IT!

Learn how to dry like a pro with this step-by-step guide.

We love dehydrating! It's a quick and easy way to preserve food for everyday cooking and for turning your basic food storage into delicious meals. You can save money by just drying the types of food your family loves, by using produce from your own garden and by stocking up when foods are on sale.

WHICH DEHYDRATOR IS BEST?

Dehydrating removes moisture from food so bacteria, yeasts & molds can't grow and spoil food. It also slows down action of enzymes but doesn't inactivate them. The fastest and best method to dry food is using an electric food dehydrator. You can buy dehydrators online or at department stores and at thrift stores or garage sales.



THE INEXPENSIVE DEHYDRATOR

These round dehydrators come at a much cheaper price (about \$60) but have a few attributes that make them harder to use. Fans on top make for uneven drying unless you are willing to rotate your trays often. You may also have problems with food sticking to or falling through the trays.



THE EXCALIBUR DEHYDRATOR:

\$199.50, [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

These come with 15 square feet of drying space, flexible polyscreen tray inserts to prevent foods from sticking and an efficient side fan that dehydrates evenly. If you can't afford one now, ask around, post it on Facebook and borrow someone else's while you save.



NOT THAT!

Air Drying: Fruits because of their high sugar content are safe to dry out-of-doors, and only if it is hot, dry and breezy. It can take up to a week for foods to dry in the sun. For this reason they make the Not That list.

Oven drying would seem the most practical way to experiment with dehydration but it is not recommended because most oven temperatures don't go low enough to safely dry the food leaving them scorched, too brittle and less favorable than foods dried in a dehydrator.

HOW TO DRY IN 5 EASY STEPS



Start with clean hands and a clean workspace. Thoroughly wash fruits or vegetables.



Peel, slice or dice your fruits or vegetables.



Treat or blanch as needed.



Then place on trays to dry, dry, DRY!

Case Hardening Drying quicker at higher temperatures causes the outer layer of the food to cook too fast thereby forming a case around the food which can lead to the food turning "sour" or moldy and it will have to be tossed. Best Bet...dry slowly at suggested temperatures (consult your dehydrating book).

GIVE IT A DRY



CROUTONS/
BREAD CRUMBS

FRUIT

VEGETABLES



HERBS

POWDERS/
SAUCES

INSTANT
MEALS

FRUIT LEATHER

You can also dehydrate baby food, yogurt bites, crackers, chips, and dog food.

NOT THAT...

There are LOTS of things you can dehydrate safely at home. You can even dry pasta, rise bread, make yogurt or refresh your crackers using your dehydrator!



BUT there are a few foods that the Center for Home Food Preservation has deemed unsafe for home dehydrators. They include: dairy, eggs, cheese, fatty or oily foods (avocados and meats). These products, if properly dried (call extension office if any doubt) can only be safely stored for short periods of time.

PACKAGING & STORING

Dehydrated foods are susceptible to insect contamination and moisture re-absorption and must be properly packaged and stored immediately. First, cool completely. Warm food causes sweating which could provide enough moisture for mold to grow. If you are going to use you dried foods within a month or two, you can just put them into Ziplocs or Tupperware type containers.



Click on pictures to see where you can purchase these items.

For longer term:

- 1) Store dried foods in clean, dry canning jars (using Food Saver Canning Jar attachment); plastic freezer containers with tight-fitting lids; or in plastic freezer bags.
- 2) Vacuum in sealable bags using Food Saver or Seal-a-Meal.
- 3) Pack foods in amounts that can be used all at once. Each time a package is re-opened, the food is exposed to air and moisture that can lower the quality of the food and result in spoilage.

The taste and quality of all stored food is affected by HALT: humidity; air; light and temperature. The drier; less oxygen; darker and cooler it is the longer the food will look and taste good. Food quality is affected by most by heat. For instance: if the food is stored at a constant temperature 60° = it will store for 20 years; if stored at 95° it will last 2.5 years. Cooler is better. If you are going to store things in the Mylar or food saver bags you will need to put them in buckets to keep the rodents and light out. You can also add oxygen packs to extend storage life.

USING DEHYDRATED FRUITS & VEGGIES



Dehydrated foods do not rehydrate instantly, but with a little time and patience they will come back to life.

Rehydrating tips if not being cooked with other food:

Fruits: cover with 2x warm water and let rehydrate about 10 minutes or until soft, drain and use or eat.

Vegetables: cover with 2x boiling water and let rehydrate about 15 minutes, drain and use or eat.

Hint: for the best and most complete rehydration. Cover DH food with 2x as much hot water in canning jar and cover. Keep 4+ hours or overnight in refrigerator and then drain and heat if needed.

Meals: break up food into pan. Cover with 2x boil water, let simmer 5-10 minutes or until done.

If cooking dehydrated foods in meals that include liquid, such as rice, pasta or other food, you can just rehydrate them as the meal cooks. Simply add

the DH food(s), along with the liquid (2x more liquid than DH food) in a saucepan. Bring to a boil and simmer for 10-15 minutes until DH foods are soft. They may require a little more soaking time.

Easy Crockpot meal: dump all ingredients, including extra water for dehydrated foods, in crockpot and cook on low 5-6 hours and EAT!

COOL TOOLS



BRIEFTONS MANDOLIN SLICER
Amazon.com, \$24.99



TOMATO SLICER
Amazon.com, \$7.19



GOOD BLENDER



VICTORIO APPLE SLICE, PEEL, CORER
Amazon.com, \$21.96



FOOD SAVER JAR ATTACHEMENT
Amazon.com, \$9.95



FOOD SAVER VACUUM SYSTEM
Amazon.com, \$80

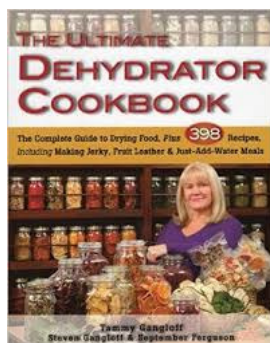
Having Cool Tools for dehydrating, adds ease and speed to the job.

There are several tools or supplies you will love using to dry foods.

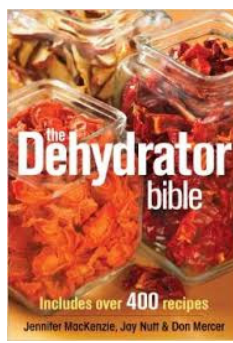
These include: a mandolin or sharp knife; a tomato slicer; and an apple peeler, corer, slicer or a coffee grinder or heavy duty blender to make fruit and vegetable powders.

OTHER RESOURCES...

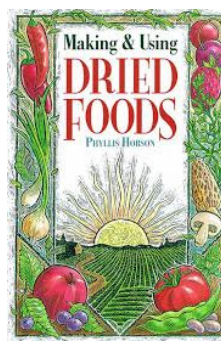
There are many great dehydrating resources out there; some of the best are even FREE. WE would highly recommend a dehydrating book. The first 3 of these are just about drying foods the 4th, So Easy to Preserve" has both canning and dehydrating in it. You can find these and many others online or at your local bookstore.



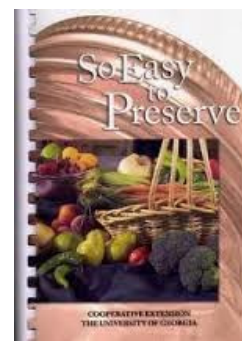
Amazon.com, \$16.63



Amazon.com, \$16.63



Amazon.com, Used



Amazon.com, Used

FREE RESOURCES ON THE WEB

Facebook

Dehydrating Divas and Dudes (great resource for ANY dehydrating questions, fast and reliable answers)

Websites

www.21stcenturysimpleliving.com (lots of great tips and recipes- affiliated with Dehydrating Divas and Dudes)

www.dehydrate2store.com (videos, recipes and more)

<http://nchfp.uga.edu/> (National Center for Home Food Preservation)

www.storethisnotthat.com