

Pickled or Non-Fermented Foods: Bread-and-Butter Pickles¹

United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service²

Bread-and-Butter Pickles

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

Yield: About 8 pints

Procedure: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard. Cut into 3/16-inch slices. Combine cucumbers and onions in a large bowl. Add salt. Cover with 2 inches crushed or cubed ice. Refrigerate 3 to 4 hours, adding more ice as needed.

Combine remaining ingredients in a large pot. Boil 10 minutes. Drain and add cucumbers and onions and slowly reheat to boiling. Fill jars with slices and cooking syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process according to the recommendations in [Table 1](#) or use 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.

Variation for firmer pickles: Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16-inch off blossom end and discard. Cut into 3/16-inch slices. Mix 1 cup pickling lime and 1/2 cup salt to 1 gallon water in a 2- to 3-gallon crock or enamelware container. 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 1 hour in fresh cold water. Repeat the rinsing and soaking steps two more times. Handle carefully, as slices will be brittle. Drain well.

Storage: After processing and cooling, jars should be stored 4 to 5 weeks to develop ideal flavor.

Variation: Squash bread-and-butter pickles. Substitute slender (1 to 1-1/2 inches in diameter) zucchini or yellow summer squash for cucumbers.

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2. Reviewed for use in Florida by Amy Simonne, assistant professor, Food Safety and Quality, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.

Table 1. Recommended process time for bread-and-butter pickles in a boiling-water canner.

		Process Time at Altitudes of		
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Style of Pack	Jar Size			
Hot	Pints or Quarts	10 min	15	20

*After the process is complete, turn off the heat and remove the canner lid. Wait five minutes before removing jars.