



High Acid Canning Basics: Teaching Checklist

(Presenter Use Only: Cover these topics in class)

0. Mission to teach research-based methods; will mention products as examples, not endorsements
1. Use reputable recipe
 - A *reputable* recipe follows USDA standards for canning to pasteurize the product
 - No paraffin wax seal; it can expand/contract with temperature changes and let in contaminants
 - No open kettle (no processing, force seal with hot food)
 - Review recipe before starting
2. Prep equipment, food & jars
 - Prep canning equipment (highlight canner parts)
 - Boiling water: Show/explain alternatives for canners & rack; depth needed for canning
 - Steam canner: explain how it works (fills with steam, when full, steam forced from vent)
 - Rinse/scrub food; pH determines canning method
 - Clean, rinse, then sanitize work area (& phone timer!)
 - Handwashing (gloves/band aids), hair, apron
 - Air dry sanitized surfaces
 - Pre-measure and lay out all ingredients
 - Jars: no expiration date; check **all** jars for chips, cracks or bubbles
 - Lids: check quality; single use; read manufacturer's instructions – no heating necessary!
 - Wash jars, lids and rings in hot soapy water and rinse well
 - Sterilize jars if <10 minutes processing
 - Boil 10 minutes, plus 1 minute for every 1000' above 1000'
 - Steam canner? Put jars upside down on rack and steam 10 minutes, plus any extra
3. Heat canner water; heat jars in canner
 - Boiling water canner: at least ½ full; steam canner: water just above rack
 - Water temp when adding jars: not boiling, Hot pack: 180°F, Raw pack: 140°F
 - Hot pack: hot food in jars; retains long term color, releases air from food, less float, pack more product
 - Raw pack: put cold food w/hot liquid in jars; long term color fades, less pliable to pack, more float, food absorbs liquid which drops liquid level
4. Fill jars
 - Use headspace listed in recipe
 - Too much headspace: all air may not be forced from jar, impacting seal & oxidizing food
 - Too little headspace: product may boil out and onto jar rim, impacting seal
 - Show variety of funnels to fill jar
 - Measure headspace (distance between top of product & bottom of lid); Headspace tool: use on inside or outside of jar
 - Debubble: use plastic tool/chopstick to release trapped air bubbles; adjust headspace as needed
 - Wipe jar rim with damp paper towel (use vinegar if fat/grease in jar)
 - Set lids on jars, Apply rings finger tight (show how to check if finger tight)
 - Too tight? Air can't escape jar, pressure may buckle lid or break jar
 - Too loose? Lid may not stay on

5. Jars in canner
 - Straight up, straight over, straight down
 - Boiling water canner: 1-2" water over top of jars; use debubbler to measure after jars added; add more boiling water *around* jars if needed; 2" if processing time is more than 30 minutes
 - Steam canner: add more boiling water to bring water level to top of rack
 - Space jars so they don't touch
 - Lid on; high heat

6. Vigorous boil/Steady Stream of Steam? Start timing; Adjust for altitude
 - All canning recipes use sea level as the criteria for processing times
 - At sea level, water boils at 212°F
 - At higher altitudes (above 1000') water boils at a lower temperature; increase processing time to compensate
 - Steam canner: check internal temperature with thermometer inserted into vent hole

7. Adjust heat to maintain a **gentle** boil
 - Boiling water canner: Vigorous boils rock jars in canner, may tip or bang into each other
 - Steam canner:
 - Vigorous boil may cause lid to lift up and belch out steam and draw in cold air
 - Maximum 45 minutes processing
 - Not boiling/steaming? Restart timing

8. Ding! Timer off; heat off
 - Boiling water canner: remove lid immediately
 - Steam canner: keep lid on

9. Wait ≤ 5 minutes
 - Not a food safety issue; lets food settle in jars and easier to acclimate to outside temperature
 - Boiling water canner: wait no more than 5 minutes
 - Steam canner: keep lid on for 2-3 minutes

10. Jars out
 - Straight up, straight over, straight down
 - Place on protected surface to prevent thermal shock from contact with cold counter (towel, cutting board, tray, silicon baking mat, etc.)
 - Hands off jars: don't wipe water off lids or tighten rings

11. Cool 12-24 hours, wash & label
 - Keep jars out of drafts; let cool naturally
 - Natural cooling period allows rubber gaskets to dry and harden around rim, completing seal
 - After 12-24 hours check for seals
 - Unsealed jar?
 - Store jars in refrigerator; use within a few days, or
 - Reprocess using a new lid
 - Remove rings of sealed jars, wash jars and rings and dry
 - Label jars
 - Store jars in cool, dry, dark area
 - Use within 1 year for best quality