



Fermented Dill Pickles

Yield: about 7 - 9 pints or 3 – 4 quarts

Ingredients:

- 8 lbs pickling cucumbers (4 inch)
- 2 Tbl dill seed or 4-5 heads fresh or dry dill weed
- 8 c water
- ¼ c vinegar (5% acidity)
- ½ c salt
- 2 cloves garlic (optional)
- 2 tsp whole mixed pickling spices (optional)

Important Notes:

Please read [Using Boiling Water Canners](#) before beginning. If this is your first time canning, it is recommended that you read [Principles of Home Canning](#).

Pickle recipes, ingredients and processing recommendations have changed over the years. To ensure that your pickles are safe and successful, check your recipe with these pointers in mind:

- Use up-to-date recipes from reliable sources.
- Make sure to use vinegar that is 5% acidity.
- Brined pickles must include salt.
- Processing instructions must be correct. Fermented pickles must not be processed until they have a sour taste.

Fermenting Crock

- A 1-gallon crock is ideal for fermenting up to 5 pounds of cucumbers. A 5-gallon stoneware crock is ideal for fermenting up to 25 lbs of cucumbers.
- Select a crock that is made for food use. Food grade plastic and glass containers are excellent substitutes.

Note: It is not safe to use garbage cans or other containers that are not made to come into contact with food for humans.

Weight

- A weight keeps fermenting food under the brine. When using a crock, select a dinner plate or glass plate that is slightly smaller than the container opening. Weigh it down with 2- or 3-quart jars that are filled with water and have closed lids.
- You can also use a large, food-grade plastic bag (either heavyweight or double-bagged) as a weight. Fill the bag with brine (1 ½ Tbl salt per 1 quart water) and close it. Place the bag in the fermentation container to cover and hold down the fermenting food. Using brine prevents dilution in case the bag leaks.
- Cucumbers must be kept 1-2 inches under the brine while fermenting. After weighing down, cover the container opening with a clean, heavy bath towel to prevent contamination from insects or mold during fermentation.

Utensils

- Do not use zinc, copper, brass, galvanized metal, or iron utensils. These metals may react with acid or salt and affect the quality (color changes) and safety of pickles.

Instructions:

1. Wash cucumbers. Cut 1/16 inch off blossom end but leave ¼ inch of stem at other end.
2. Place half of the dill and half of the other flavoring on the bottom of a clean suitable container (refer to notes above).
3. Add cucumbers, remaining dill and desired spices
4. Dissolve salt in vinegar and water, and pour over cucumbers.
5. Add suitable weight and cover.
6. Store for about 3-4 weeks in a location where temperature is 70-75 degrees F.
 - a. Temperatures of 55-56 degrees F are acceptable, but the fermentation will take 5-6 weeks.
 - b. Pickles will become too soft if temperatures are above 80 degrees F during fermentation.
7. Check the container several times a week and promptly remove surface scum or mold.

CAUTION: If the pickles become soft or slimy, or if they develop a disagreeable odor, discard them.

Storage

Fully fermented pickles may be stored in the original container for 4-6 months, provided you refrigerate them and remove surface scum and molds regularly.

Canning is a better way to store fully fermented pickles. Refer to canning instructions below.

Canning

Canning is a better way to store fully fermented pickles

- a. Pour the brine into a pan, heat slowly to a boil, and simmer 5 minutes.
- b. Filter brine through paper coffee filters to reduce cloudiness, if desired.
- c. Fill hot pint or quart jars with pickles and hot brine, leaving ½ inch headspace.
- d. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if needed.
- e. Wipe rims and adjust lids.
- f. Process as shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – Hot Pack Processing Times for Quick Sweet Pickles

Jar Size	Process Time at Elevations of		
	0 – 1,000 ft	1,001 – 6,000 ft	Above 6,001 ft
Pint	10 min	15 min	20 min
Quart	15 min	20 min	25 min