

Let's Preserve Cherries

- Recommended varieties** All varieties of cherries can be used.
- Quantity** A lug weighs 25 pounds and yields 8 to 12 quarts. An average of 17-1/2 pounds makes a 7-quart canner load; 11 pounds makes 9 pints. An average of 1-3/8 pounds makes 1 pint of frozen cherries.
- Quality** Select freshly harvested cherries with deep uniform color and ideal maturity for eating fresh. Don't delay preserving them, with or without seeds.
- Preparation** Stem and wash. Pit if desired. If pitted, immediately place cherries into cold water containing 1 teaspoon of powdered ascorbic acid or six 500 mg vitamin C tablets per gallon to prevent stem end discoloration. If preserved unpitted, prick skins on opposite sides with a clean needle to prevent splitting.
- Freezing procedure** Don't freeze more than 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. Cherries may be packed with syrup or dry sugar.
- To make a syrup pack, mix and dissolve 2-1/2 cups sugar in 4 cups of water for sour cherries; or mix 1-1/4 cups sugar in 4 cups water for sweet cherries. Add 1 cup syrup to each quart of prepared cherries.
- To make a dry pack, mix 2/3 cup dry sugar per quart of sour cherries; or 1/3 cup sugar per quart of sweet cherries.
- To package, fill pint or quart freezer bags to a level 3 to 4 inches from their tops. Squeeze out air, leave 1-inch headspace, seal, label, and freeze. Before freezing, bags may be inserted into reusable rigid plastic freezer containers for added protection against punctures and leakage.
- Canning procedure** Wash jars. Prepare lids according to manufacturer's instructions. Cherries in jars may be covered with your choice of water, apple, or white grape juice, or more commonly with a very light, light, or medium syrup. A medium syrup is suggested for sour cherries, and a very light syrup for sweet cherries. To make a light syrup for a canner load of quarts, mix 1-1/4 cups of sugar in 10-1/2 cups water and heat to dissolve; or mix and dissolve 2-1/4 cups sugar in 9 cups water to make a light syrup; or 3-3/4 cups sugar in 8-1/4 cups water for medium syrup.

To make a hot pack. place drained cherries in boiling syrup, juice, or water and bring to a boil. Fill clean jars with hot cherries and cooking liquid, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. *To make a raw pack,* fill jars with drained cherries and cover with your choice of boiling liquid, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Wipe the jar sealing edge with a clean, damp paper towel. Add lids and tighten screw bands. You may process jars in a boiling water or pressure canner.

To process in a boiling water canner, preheat canner filled halfway with water to 180°F for hot packs or 140°F for raw packs. Load sealed jars into the canner rack and lower with handles: or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto rack in canner.

Add water if needed to a level of 1 inch above jars and add cover. When water boils vigorously, lower heat to maintain a gentle boil and process for recommended time.

Process times Recommended process times in a boiling water canner at designated altitudes

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time at altitude of	
		0-1000 ft (min)	1001-3000 ft (min)
Hot	Pint	15	20
	Quart	20	25
Raw	Pint	20	25
	Quart	25	30

To process in a pressure canner, place the jar rack, 2 inches of water, and sealed jars in canner. Fasten lids, and heat canner on high setting. After exhausting steam 10 minutes, add weighted gauge or close petcock to pressurize the canner. Start timing the recommended process time when the desired pressure is reached.

Recommended process times in a pressure canner at designated altitudes

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time (min)	Canner gauge pressure at altitudes of			
			Dial gauge canner		Weighted gauge canner	
			0-2000 ft (lbs)	2001-4000ft (lbs)	0-1000 ft (lbs)	Above 1000ft (lbs)
Raw or hot	Pint or quart	10	6	7	5	10

Regulate heat to maintain a uniform pressure. When processing is complete, remove canner from heat. Air-cool canner until it is fully depressurized. Then slowly remove weighted gauge or open petcock, wait 2 more minutes, unfasten and carefully remove canner lid.

After processing is completed, remove jars from canner with ajar lifter and place on a towel rack. Do not retighten screw bands. Air-cool jars 12 to 24 hours. Remove screw bands and check lid seals. If the center of the lid is

indented, wash, dry, label, and store jar in a clean, cool, dark place. If lid is unsealed, examine and replace jar if defective, use new lid, and reprocess as before. Wash bands and store separately. Cherries are best if consumed within one year and are safe as long as lids remain vacuum sealed.

Nutritional information

Average nutrient content per a 1/2 cup serving (4 to 4.4 oz.) of cherries

	Raw		Frozen	Canned
	Sour, red	Sweet	Sour, red, unsweetened	Sour, red, light syrup
Calories	26	52	36	94
Carbohydrates	6	12	8	24
Fats,g	0.1	7.0	0.3	0.1
Protein, g	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.9
Sodium, mg	15	0.5	0.5	1.5
Vitamin A *	10	2	10	4
Vitamin C*	8	8	2	Less than 2%

* U.S. Recommended Daily Allowances (US RDA). Cherries are an insignificant source of other vitamins.

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