



Dehydrating Rebels Cookbook

Stocking up on long-term storage food is one of the building blocks of any survival plan. It all begins with growing and raising your own groceries - and ends with preservation. Sure, you could invest thousands of dollars into long-term food storage buckets (and should supplement your edible stockpile with them) but freeze drying, dehydrating, canning, and smoking the food you cultivate yourself is a far more economical option.

I doubt even newbie preppers fail to grasp the difference between canning, smoking, and dehydration methods of food preservation. But, many preppers, newbies or not, are still a little foggy about the pros and cons difference between freeze drying and dehydrating.

What Is Dehydrated Food?

Moisture is removed from food slowly when using an electric dehydrator and at an even more sloth like pace when using a solar dehydrator. The patience required to dehydrate food aside, it is an economical and simple food preservation method. The dehydration method allows you to preserve foods that can be highly difficult or time-consuming to save otherwise. You can not water bath or pressure can lettuce, but you can dehydrate it, for example. Eggs (and the powdering of them) , milk, and other dairy products, including cheese, can all be successfully dehydrated in a standard residential machine that usually costs less than \$100.

Dehydration has been a popular and sound method of food preservation for centuries. The dehydration of fruits and vegetables dates back to 12,000 BC when the Romans and people in the Middle East would use what were commonly referred to as “still houses.”



It involved a process of slowly smoking food to remove the moisture from them - in a fashion that was similar but slightly different than the smoking methods used to preserve meat and fish.

Modern electric dehydrators still function using the same premise. When the machine is turned on and food placed inside, hot and dry air is circulated around, over, and beneath the food on its racks. The temperature settings on the machine go high enough to remove all of the moisture from the food, but not so high as to actually cook the food.

Freeze Dried vs Dehydrated Food

What Is Freeze Dried food?

Freeze dried food is preserved through a flash frozen process. The food is then stored inside of either an airtight container or a vacuum pouch. The moisture in freeze dried food dissipates far more rapidly during the preservation process than it does when being dehydrated.

It is because of the rapid water removal that freeze dried food does not wind up with a sort of deformed and shriveled look.

Generally, freeze dried food will rehydrate far more quickly than dehydrated food.



Freeze drying food to preserve it is still in its infancy, when compared to dehydrating, smoking, and even canning. This method of food preservation is believed to have first been used on a basic level, during the time of the Inca empire. But, it was not until World War II when the United States Military learned how to use freeze drying to preserve medicine, plasma, and ultimately food, for the troops, that it became a slightly more commonplace method of food preservation.

Even though a machine is generally required to freeze dry food, the process is no more complicated than dehydration. The food being preserved is put on racks inside of the machine's vacuum chamber and then the temperature is quickly lowered to below 32 degrees - and then slowly raised back up above freezing.

The freeze drying process takes the food from a solid to a gaseous state without destroying either its nutritional value or its structure.

Home freeze drying ovens hit the marketplace several years ago, and have come down in cost a little bit since then - but not much. Purchasing such a machine will still run you around \$2,000 to \$4,500, depending on its capacity.

Although there is a high upfront cost associated with this method of food preservation, in the long run it is typically far more economical an option than purchasing long-term food storage buckets...at least if you grow and raise a significant part of your own groceries.

You can also freeze dry food using a DIY oven, and perhaps even successfully (some claim) without a machine.



Top Differences Between Dehydrated and Freeze Dried Food

Composition - Dehydrated food will weigh a lot less than freeze dried food. If you tossed some freeze dried fruit into your mouth it would almost immediately become soft. Dehydrated fruit, like banana chips, will maintain their hard texture and weight until they become rehydrated - or reconstituted.

Because freeze dried food is much lighter weight than dehydrated food, it is easier to pack when stored in the same type of container.

Appearance - This may be the most obvious difference between the two types of preserved long-term storage food. Dehydrated food will always have a squished appearance but freeze dried food will remain looking basically like a smaller version of its original self. The look of the food likely does not matter to the prepper who merely wants to stockpile as much easily portable food as quickly as and cheaply as possible. Many if not most, preppers who dehydrate food also powder much of it - again changing the appearance of the food. Powdered eggs, cheese, milk, and butter conserve both storage and packing space.

Moisture - The primary point of food preservation is to remove as much water from the food as possible to prevent the growth of mold and decomposure, which causes the food to spoil and make it unsafe to eat. Dehydrating food eliminates approximately 95 percent of its moisture content, when preserved professionally or with top notch equipment inside the home. Depending upon the quality of a home dehydrator, the food being preserved could have up to a 10 percent moisture content remaining, as compared to professionally dehydrated food. Foods that have been freeze dried have had up to 99 percent of their moisture content removed.



The lower the moisture content preserved food has, the longer it's shelf life.

Nutrition - It is the generally accepted belief that freeze dried foods still possess the vast majority of the nutritional minerals and vitamins they had when fresh - with the possible exception of vitamin C that evaporates rather rapidly during the preservation process. The dehydration process is not known to alter either the iron or fiber content of the food being preserved, but can cause a decrease in its minerals and vitamins - diminishing its nutritional value. Typically, a food's niacin, thiamine, riboflavin, and vitamins A and C are most negatively affected by dehydrating.

Cooking - Freeze-dried typically only needs to be soaked in cold water to make it ready to eat in under five minutes. Professionally dehydrated food is often recommended to soak on hot water for a minimum of 15 minutes. Home dehydrated food, in my personal experience, can be rehydrated in Lukewarm or even cold water in five minutes - with the exception of meat which takes longer.

Expense - The overall cost difference between freeze dried and dehydrated food has too many variables to calculate. First it will depend on type, then amount, energy costs to run a machine, and whether or not the food is being preserved professionally or at home. When purchasing commercially preserved dehydrated or freeze dried food, the dehydrated version is almost always cheaper when comparing like items and amounts.

Shelf Life - The type of food being preserved and the chosen method both have an impact on its shelf life. You can reasonably expect dehydrated powders, fruits, and vegetables to remain safe to eat for around 15 to 20 years if they were both preserved properly by professionals using a quality machine and stored recommended, according to the packaging on many varieties of dehydrated long-term storage food pouches. Some types of dehydrated food, like oats, sugar, hard wheat, salt, honey, and sugar, are advertised to last up to three decades - under the same set of circumstances. Professionally freeze dried food is typically advertised to have a 25 to 30 year overall shelf life when stored at between 33 and 60 degrees.



Home Freeze Dried vs Dehydrated Food Shelf Life Comparison

Each method of home food preservation results in an extensively long shelf life for the stockpiled food, providing the food was both preserved and stored properly. Generally, both freeze dried food and dehydrated food will keep as long as water bathed, pressure canned, and smoked food - likely longer. Freeze dried food that has been stored in a Mylar pouch, has been known to remain safely edible for at least 10 years when processed by a residential machine.

Dehydrated food that has been stored in an airtight container, and preferably in a vacuum sealed Mason jar or vacuum sealed bag, has been estimated to remain safely edible for about the same amount of time, but likely a little longer, when processed in a typical home use grade machine.

Once a pouch, bag, or jar or food using either method of long-term preservation has been opened, the contents inside will begin to lose its longevity. There is much debate about how long the food can keep once it has again been exposed to air and the moisture in it.



Many folks believe, either based on science or their personal experience, freeze dried foods must be used within only a few days after being opened. Dehydrated food is believed to be able to be opened, a few scoops taken out, and then resealed again and retain at least a decent portion of its longevity, as long as the remaining food has not gotten wet.

Basically, the results may vary when it comes to the shelf life of opened food, that is why it is always good to store in small portions just to be on the safe side. Now, in my personal experience, I have opened and scooped a few tablespoons or so of powdered eggs for camping breakfast cooking, put the Mason jar lid back on the jar (that is no longer vacuum sealed because we primitive camp) and then safely used the remaining contents over the course of a year. I am not a food safety professional or making any formal recommendation or claim as to the edible nature of opened dehydrated food, I am merely sharing a personal experience that did not cause any ill effects.

Which Tastes Better?

Flavor will be way down there on your priority list when you have to break into your long-term survival food stockpile. Yet, the taste difference between freeze dried and dehydrated food is still a topic worth considering when engaging in an overall pros and cons list between the two food preservation methods.

The answer? It Depends.

Personal preference and the overall finicky nature of the individual munching down on the long-term storage food will be the deciding factor of any taste test.

The way the food is prepared, if you are eating more than fruits and veggies, as well as what other flavorings are added into it - perhaps a nice helping of tasty wild edibles, can make a big difference in taste.

In general, the original taste of the food is often considered to still be held in food that has been freeze dried. This likely occurs because it was only exposed to a fraction of the heat that its dehydrated counterpart was and maintains the bulk of its typical texture. Many folks both dehydrate and freeze dry the groceries they grow, raise, and occasionally purchase on sale. Some people notice a taste difference between dehydrated and freeze dried food - others don't ... and its a mixed bag of results which type of food preservation method is favored.

The Machines Behind The Food

Dehydrators come in both round and square versions, with a square one being more handy for meat. Buying tray liners and screen accessories, even if your chosen machine comes with a few, will come in a lot more handy than you might think.. Even if the machine comes with a ton of trays or the box states you can add a ton of trays, using more than four or five, depending upon the machine, only serves to increase drying time and uses more electricity.

A freeze drying machine is a big expense for most of us middle class preppers, but it is definitely one worth saving up for if you are going to include freeze dried food in your preps. .



When you compare the cost of a small machine with how much money it would take to buy commercially manufactured freeze dried food, it is a no brainer for anyone who is growing or raising a lot of their own food already.

A small 16 and a half inch by 25 inch Harvest Right freeze dryer costs just under \$2,000. According to the manufacturer, the food preserved in the machine will last for 25 years. The Freeze dryer is capable of preserving between four to seven pounds per batch. It runs on a standard 110-volt outlet and should function well on generator power as well, depending upon your generator's capacity.

Dehydrating Tips

Fruits are a great option for beginner dehydrators because they are naturally sweet, nutritious, and easy to prepare. Some of the best fruits for dehydration include apples, bananas, strawberries, peaches, and blueberries.

How to prepare:

Cut the fruit into thin slices, about 1/4 inch in thickness. Remove any seeds, pits, or stems. Arrange the fruit slices on the dehydrator tray, leaving some space between each slice. Dehydrate the fruit for 8-12 hours at 135°F until they are dry and crispy.

Hints

- Select ripe fruits to ensure they dehydrate evenly.
- If you're worried about the fruits turning brown, you can dip them into a mixture of lemon juice and water before putting them in the dehydrator.
- To check if the fruits are done, remove one slice and let it cool for a minute. If it's crispy, then your fruits are ready.

Vegetables

Dehydrated vegetables are a great way to add more nutrition to your meals, as well as a great way to preserve them for longer. Some of the best vegetables to dehydrate include bell peppers, carrots, onions, mushrooms, and tomatoes.

How to prepare

Wash and clean the vegetables. Cut them into thin, even slices, about 1/4 inch in thickness. Arrange the slices on the dehydrator tray, making sure to leave some space between each slice. Dehydrate the vegetables at 135°F for 6-12 hours until they are dry and crispy.

Hints

- To ensure that the vegetables have evenly sliced, use a mandolin slicer.
- Blanch the vegetables before dehydrating them. This will help to retain their nutrients and color.
- Check the vegetables occasionally to make sure they are not overdehydrating.

Dehydrating Eggs

Dehydrating eggs is a convenient and long-lasting way to preserve this protein-rich food for camping trips, emergency preparedness, or any time you need an egg product without the need for refrigeration. Here's a step-by-step guide to dehydrating eggs.

Equipment Needed:

- Eggs
- Blender or food processor
- Dehydrator
- Parchment paper
- Airtight container for storage

Step 1: Crack the eggs and separate the whites from the yolks. Use only fresh eggs for best results.

Step 2: Pour the egg whites and yolks into separate bowls and whisk them until combined.

Step 3: Pour the egg whites and yolks separately into a blender or food processor and puree them until smooth.

Step 4: Spread the pureed egg whites and yolks on parchment paper in a thin, even layer, leaving some space between them.

Step 5: Place parchment paper with egg mixture directly onto dehydrator trays. Set the dehydrator temperature to 145°F (63°C).

Step 6: Dehydrate the eggs for 8-10 hours, or until they are completely dry and brittle. Check them periodically to ensure they are not over-drying.

Step 7: Remove the dehydrated eggs from the dehydrator and let them cool for a few minutes.

Step 8: Break the dehydrated eggs into small pieces and blend in a food processor until a powder is formed. Alternatively, they can be crushed by placing them in a sealable bag and crushing the pieces with a rolling pin.

Step 9: Store the dehydrated egg powder in an airtight container and keep it in a cool, dry place away from light and moisture.

Tips and Tricks:

- Before blending, adding a pinch of baking powder or an acidic ingredient will make the eggs fluffier.
- When reconstituting the eggs, use a ratio of 1 part egg powder to 2 parts water to yield 1 egg.
- A dehydrated egg can be mixed with water, then cooked as usual.
- To avoid over-drying the eggs in the dehydrator, you can set a timer and check the eggs hourly.
- You can use this method to dehydrate other egg products such as powdered egg whites or powdered egg yolks.

Potential Pitfalls and Solutions:

- Not whisking the egg mixture properly can result in an egg that is too dense or lumpy. Whisk thoroughly to avoid this issue.
- Over-drying the eggs will make them too crisp.
- Store eggs in an air tight container to prevent mold or bacteria growth..

Dehydrate Milk

Step 1: Prepare the milk

Pour 1 cup of milk into a blender and blend it briefly for a few seconds to remove any bubbles or foam on the surface. If you're using whole milk, you may want to skim the cream off the top first, as it can interfere with the dehydration process.

Step 2: Pour the milk

Pour the blended milk onto the dehydrator tray that comes with the machine. Leave at least one inch of space between each pour to allow for even air circulation.

Step 3: Optimal temperature and time

Set your dehydrator to 135°F (or according to the manufacturer's instructions) and let the milk dehydrate for about 8 to 12 hours until it dries and becomes hard. The drying time may differ based on the wattage of your dehydrator, the amount of milk you pour, and the humidity of your environment.

Step 4: Store the dehydrated milk

Once the milk is fully dried, remove it from the dehydrator tray and let it cool down for a few minutes. Then, transfer the milk to an airtight container, such as a plastic bag, jar, or container with a tight-fitting lid. Make sure to label the container with the date of dehydration and location, then store it in a cool, dry place.

Tips for storing dehydrated milk

The dehydrated milk can last for up to a year if it's stored correctly. Store it in a cool, dry place away from sunlight, heat, or moisture to avoid bacterial growth. To revive the milk, mix one part of dehydrated milk with two parts of water, or use it in a recipe that calls for dehydrated milk directly.

Delicious ways to use dehydrated milk

Dehydrated milk powder can be used in a variety of recipes, such as:

1. Baking: Use dehydrated milk as a replacement for regular milk in your baking recipes to make protein-rich bread, cakes, pancakes, waffles, and more.
2. Instant coffee creamer: Mix the dehydrated milk with cinnamon, cocoa powder, or vanilla extract, then store it in a jar to use as an instant coffee creamer.
3. Smoothies: Add a tablespoon or two of dehydrated milk powder to your smoothies to add extra protein and creaminess.
4. Soups and sauces: Use dehydrated milk to thicken your soups, stews, or sauces without increasing the overall liquid content.
5. Backpacking food: Dehydrated milk is ideal for backpacking, camping, or hiking, as it's lightweight, easy to pack, and doesn't require refrigeration. Simply mix it with water to create creamy milk for your coffee, oatmeal, or pasta.

Dehydrate Cheese

Dehydrating cheese is a popular method of food preservation that can extend the shelf life of this dairy product by removing moisture. The resulting dehydrated cheese is a convenient ingredient that can be used in a variety of recipes, such as soups, stews, sauces, dips, or snacks.

Ingredients and Equipment:

- Cheese (hard or semi-hard varieties, such as cheddar, Parmesan, Gouda, Swiss, or Colby)
- Dehydrator or oven
- Parchment paper or silicone mat
- Tongs or spatula
- Airtight container or Ziplock bag

Instructions:

1. Choose the cheese: Not all types of cheese are suitable for dehydration. You want to pick hard or semi-hard varieties that have a low moisture content, as this will make them easier to dehydrate and store. Avoid soft cheeses, like Brie or Camembert, which may turn rancid or moldy when dehydrated. Some of the best cheeses for dehydration are cheddar, Parmesan, Gouda, Swiss, or Colby.

2. Prep the cheese: Cut the cheese into thin slices or small cubes, roughly 1/4 inch thick. You can use a knife or a cheese grater for this step. Try to make the pieces as uniform as possible, so they will dry evenly. Remove any rinds or outer layers that may prevent the cheese from dehydrating properly.

3. Arrange the cheese: Place the cheese slices or cubes on a parchment paper or silicone mat, spaced apart from each other. This will allow air to circulate around them and help them dry faster. If you are using a dehydrator, load the cheese onto the drying racks. If you are using an oven, place the parchment paper or mat on a baking sheet.

4. Dehydrate the cheese: Set your dehydrator to the lowest temperature setting, usually around 130-140°F. If you are using an oven, preheat it to 150-160°F. You want to dry the cheese slowly and gently, so it retains its flavor and texture. Depending on the thickness of the cheese pieces and the humidity of your environment, the drying process may take anywhere from 4 to 12 hours. Check the cheese periodically and turn it over with tongs or a spatula to ensure that both sides are drying evenly.

5. Test for doneness: The cheese is ready when it is crisp, dry, and brittle to the touch. It should not have any moisture or soft spots. If you are unsure whether it has dried completely, you can break a piece apart and see if it snaps easily.

6. Store the cheese: Once the cheese has cooled down, transfer it into an airtight container or Ziplock bag. Store it in a cool, dry place away from sunlight, moisture, and heat. Dehydrated cheese can last for several months or even up to a year if properly stored.

Tips:

- You can add flavorings to the cheese before dehydrating it, such as herbs, spices, garlic powder, or chili flakes, to give it a different taste.

Dehydrate Cottage Cheese

Step 1: Start by preparing the cottage cheese. It's best to use low-moisture cottage cheese for this process, as it will dehydrate more evenly. Drain any excess liquid from the cheese using a fine-mesh strainer.

Step 2: Spread the cottage cheese out in a thin layer on some parchment paper or a dehydrator tray. Make sure to leave some space between each piece to ensure even drying.

Step 3: Set the dehydrator to a temperature of 135°F. This is the optimal temperature for dehydrating cottage cheese without cooking it. If your dehydrator doesn't have a temperature setting, use the highest heat setting.

Step 4: Place the cottage cheese in the dehydrator and let it dry for 8-12 hours. This may seem like a long time, but dehydrating cheese is a slow process, and you want to make sure all the moisture is removed.

Step 5: Check the cheese periodically to ensure it's drying evenly. If you notice any areas that are still wet, move them to a different part of the tray or flip them over.

Step 6: Once the cottage cheese is completely dry, remove it from the dehydrator and let it cool for a few minutes.

Step 7: Store the dehydrated cottage cheese in an airtight container or vacuum-sealed bag until you're ready to use it.



Tips and Tricks for Dehydrating Cottage Cheese:

- Make sure to use low-moisture cottage cheese for the best results.
- It's important to spread the cheese out in a thin layer to ensure even drying.
- Check the cheese periodically to ensure it's drying evenly and flip it over if needed.
- If you're having trouble with the cheese sticking to the tray, try using some non-stick spray or lining the tray with parchment paper.

Creative Ways to Use Dehydrated Cottage Cheese:

- Use the dried cottage cheese as a topping for salads or pizza.
- Crumble it over pasta or rice dishes for added texture.
- Mix it with herbs and spices for a flavorful snack.
- Use it as a low-carb alternative to breadcrumbs in meatloaf or meatballs.

Dehydrating Sour Cream

Dehydrating sour cream is a simple process that can significantly increase its shelf life. This method involves removing the moisture content from the sour cream, making it a suitable ingredient for various recipes.

Equipment and Ingredients Needed

- A dehydrator
- A spatula
- Parchment paper
- Sour Cream

Instructions:

1. First, obtain a dehydrator that has a fruit leather tray available. Arrange the tray on the dehydrator and keep the temperature to the lowest setting, usually around 125 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Take a spatula and cover it with parchment paper. This step is necessary to avoid the sour cream from sticking to the tray or spatula.
3. Slowly spread a thin layer of sour cream over it using the parchment paper spatula. Ensure that the layer is spread evenly, with no lumps.
4. Once the sour cream layer is spread evenly over the tray, put the tray inside the dehydrator. Make sure there is enough space between the tray and the walls of the dehydrator for proper air circulation.
5. Keep it inside the dehydrator for about 8-10 hours on the lowest setting. Check the sour cream after about 6 hours to see if it's dehydrating evenly. To do this, touch the layer very lightly and see if it's dry to the touch.



6. Once the sour cream is dehydrated properly, remove the tray from the dehydrator and let it cool down completely.
7. After cooling down, gently remove the sour cream layer from the tray.
8. Crumble the dehydrated sour cream into small pieces and store it in an airtight container.

Tips for Ensuring High Quality End Product:

- Spread the sour cream thinly and evenly over the tray for optimal drying.
- Always keep the temperature of the dehydrator as low as possible to maintain the nutritional content.
- Ensure that the sour cream is fully dehydrated before removing it from the dehydrator.

Common Mistakes and Challenges:

One common mistake is to spread the sour cream too thick, making it difficult to dehydrate evenly. Also, not keeping the temperature in check can result in the sour cream turning brown and losing its nutritional content.

Dehydrate Honey

Step 1: Preheat the oven or food dehydrator to the lowest temperature setting. This should be around 120°F to 140°F.

Step 2: Spread the honey onto a non-stick dehydrator tray or a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Make sure the honey is spread in a thin layer to promote even drying.

Step 3: Place the tray or sheet in the oven or food dehydrator and dry at the lowest temperature setting for 12-24 hours. Keep an eye on the honey and rotate the tray or sheet periodically to ensure even drying.

Step 4: Check the honey for consistency after 12 hours. The honey should be dehydrated and crumbly without any moisture. If there is still some moisture, continue to dehydrate for up to 24 hours until it reaches the desired consistency.

Step 5: Remove the tray or sheet from the oven or dehydrator and let the honey cool completely before breaking it up into small pieces or grinding it into a powder using a food processor or blender.

Tips for ensuring the right consistency and temperature:

- Spread the honey in a thin layer to promote even drying.
- Keep the temperature low to prevent the honey from becoming overheated and losing its flavor and nutritional properties.
- Rotate the tray or sheet periodically to ensure even drying.
- Check the honey for moisture periodically to avoid overdrying.



Benefits of dehydrating honey:

- Dehydrated honey can be used in powdered or crystallized forms, making it easier to measure and incorporate into recipes.
- Dehydrated honey can be used in a variety of recipes, including granolas, energy bars, cookies, and more.

Recipes and dishes where dehydrated honey can be used:

- Honey-roasted nuts
- Granola bars
- Energy balls
- Honey-glazed ham or chicken
- Honey mustard dressing
- Honey-baked goods like muffins, cakes, and cookies

Storing and packaging dehydrated honey:

- Store dehydrated honey in an airtight container at room temperature for up to six months.
- Keep the container away from moisture and heat sources to prevent the honey from rehydrating.
- Add a desiccant packet to the container to absorb any excess moisture.
- Label the container with the date of dehydration and expiration date.



Dehydrate Ketchup or Mustard

Dehydrated ketchup or mustard is a great ingredient to have in your pantry if you're looking to add a concentrated flavor to your dishes.

Dehydrator Method:

Equipment Needed:

- Dehydrator
- Dehydrator trays or mesh liners
- Spatula

1. Preheat your dehydrator to 135°F.
2. Line your dehydrator trays with mesh liners or baking parchment paper.
3. Spread a thin layer of ketchup onto the dehydrator trays. Leave a little space between each spoonful.
4. Place the trays into the dehydrator and dry for about 6-8 hours or until the ketchup is completely dry and brittle.
5. Check the ketchup every hour and use a spatula to loosen and flip the ketchup to ensure even drying.
6. Once done, let it cool before breaking the dehydrated ketchup into small pieces or rounds.

Oven Method:

Equipment Needed:

- Oven
- Baking tray
- Parchment paper
- Spatula

1. Preheat the oven to 170°F.
2. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
3. Spoon the ketchup/mustard onto the parchment paper, spreading it into a thin layer.
4. Place the tray into the oven and dry for 4 to 6 hours or until the ketchup/mustard is completely dry and brittle.
5. Check the ketchup/mustard every hour and use a spatula to loosen and flip the ketchup to ensure even drying.
6. Once done, let it cool before breaking the dehydrated ketchup/mustard into small pieces or rounds.

Tips:

- If the ketchup/mustard is too thick to spread over the trays or the parchment paper, thin it out with a little water.
- The timing and temperature may vary depending on the thickness of your ketchup/mustard and your dehydrator/oven. Check often and adjust according to your settings.
- Store the dehydrated ketchup/mustard in an airtight container in a cool, dry place.

Usage:

Dehydrated ketchup/mustard can be used in various recipes such as:

- Add it to marinades, rubs or sauces to add a rich flavor to your meals.
- Sprinkle it over roasted vegetables or fries for a tangy kick.
- Caramelize the dehydrated ketchup, and use it as a topping for burgers, sandwiches, or pizzas.
- Blend it into a powder and use it as a seasoning or rub.

Dehydrate Garlic

Ingredients:

- Fresh garlic

Equipment:

- Dehydrator
- Knife
- Cutting board

Instructions:

1. Choose fresh garlic bulbs that are firm, with no signs of sprouting or soft spots. Peel the cloves and discard the skins.

2. Slice the garlic cloves thinly, about 1/8 inch thick. You can use a knife or a garlic slicer for this.

3. Arrange the sliced garlic on the dehydrator trays in a single layer, without overcrowding. Leave some space between the slices to allow for air circulation. You may need to use multiple trays depending on the amount of garlic you're dehydrating.

4. Set the dehydrator to a temperature of 125-135°F (52-57°C) and let it run for about 8-12 hours. Check the garlic periodically to make sure it's drying evenly and not browning or burning. If needed, rotate the trays or flip the garlic slices to promote even drying.

5. Once the garlic is fully dehydrated, it should be crisp and dry, with no signs of moisture. It will also be much lighter in weight and more concentrated in flavor. Turn off the dehydrator and let the garlic cool down for a few minutes.



6. Transfer the dehydrated garlic to an airtight container, such as a glass jar or a plastic bag. Make sure to label the container with the date and contents.

7. Store the dehydrated garlic in a cool, dry, and dark place away from sunlight, moisture, and heat. It should keep well for at least 6-12 months, if not longer.

Tips:

- Use fresh garlic that is free of mold, dirt, or other contaminants.

- Slice the garlic evenly to ensure uniform drying and to prevent some slices from burning while others remain moist.

- Check the garlic frequently during the drying process and adjust the temperature, time, and airflow as needed.

- You can add salt, herbs, or spices to the garlic slices before dehydrating them to enhance their flavor or use them as seasoning blends.

- To rehydrate the garlic, soak it in warm water for 30 minutes before using it in recipes that require fresh garlic.

Alternatively, you can crush the dehydrated garlic into a fine powder and use it as a dry seasoning.

- Dehydrated garlic can be used in many recipes, such as soups, stews, sauces, salads, marinades, rubs, and more.

Dehydrate Potatoes

Step 1: Gather Ingredients and Supplies

To dehydrate potatoes, you'll need:

- Potatoes
- Water
- Salt (optional)
- Knife or mandoline slicer
- Food dehydrator

Step 2: Prepare Potatoes

Wash the potatoes and slice them evenly using a knife or mandolin slicer. If you're slicing them by hand, aim for 1/8-inch thickness. For best results, keep the slices as uniform as possible.

Place the potato slices in a bowl of cold water. This will prevent them from turning brown while you're slicing the rest of the potatoes.

Step 3: Blanch the Potatoes

Blanching helps to prevent the potatoes from discoloring and removes extra starch. To blanch the potatoes, bring a large pot of water to a boil and add 1 tablespoon of salt per gallon of water (optional). Add the potato slices to the boiling water and let them cook for about 3 minutes.

Remove the slices and immediately place them into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.

Step 4: Dry the Potatoes

Pat the potato slices dry with a clean towel or paper towel, being careful not to break them.

Place the potato slices in a single layer on the dehydrator trays, leaving a bit of space between each slice. If necessary, dry the potatoes in multiple batches.



Step 5: Dehydrate the Potatoes

Set your dehydrator temperature to 125°F (52°C) and let it run for at least 6 hours or until the potato slices are completely dry and crisp.

Check the potato slices every hour or so and remove any that are dry, so they don't get overcooked and burned.

Step 6: Cool the Potatoes

After the potatoes are dry, let them cool completely on the dehydrator trays before packing them for storage. Store them in an airtight container or resealable plastic bag with a desiccant packet to absorb any moisture. Store in a cool, dry place.

Step 7: Rehydrate and Use

To rehydrate the dehydrated potatoes, soak them in hot water for 10-15 minutes or until they've softened. After that, you can use them in soups, casseroles, mashed potatoes, and other recipes.

The shelf life of dehydrated potatoes is around 2-3 years if stored properly in optimal conditions with minimum exposure to humidity, light, and heat.

Dehydrate Tomatoes

Preparation:

1. Select fresh, ripe tomatoes with no signs of spoilage.
2. Wash and dry the tomatoes thoroughly.
3. Cut off the stem and core of each tomato.
4. Slice the tomatoes into even pieces, about ¼ inch thick.

Tools:

1. Dehydrator
2. Baking sheet
3. Parchment paper
4. Knife
5. Cutting board

Dehydrating:

1. Arrange the sliced tomatoes on a single layer on the baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
2. Place the baking sheet in the dehydrator and set the temperature to between 135-145°F.
3. Leave the tomatoes to dehydrate for up to 12 hours depending on their thickness.
4. At the end of the dehydration process, the tomatoes should be hard and dry to the touch, but still pliable.
5. Remove the tomatoes from the dehydrator and let them cool to room temperature.
6. Store the dehydrated tomatoes in an airtight container and store in a cool and dry place.



Tips:

1. It is important to slice the tomatoes evenly so that they dehydrate at the same rate.
2. For best results, use ripe tomatoes which are sweeter, more flavorful, and have a higher moisture content.
3. To achieve even dehydration, rotate the trays in the dehydrator every few hours.
4. If using an oven instead of a dehydrator, set the temperature between 140-170°F and leave the oven door slightly open to allow for air circulation.
5. Extended shelf life: Dehydrated tomatoes can be stored for up to a year in an airtight container, compared to fresh tomatoes which last only for a few days.

Creative ways to use dehydrated tomatoes:

1. Add them to homemade pasta sauce, soups, or stews for added depth of flavor.
2. Use them as a topping on pizza or in salads.
3. Blend them into a powder and use as a seasoning for popcorn, roasted vegetables, or grilled meats.
4. Rehydrate the tomatoes by soaking them in hot water for 10-15 minutes and use in recipes that require canned tomatoes.

Dehydrate Peas

Equipment needed:

- Dehydrator
- Sharp knife or scissors
- Colander
- Bowl
- Paper towels
- Airtight container

Begin by selecting fresh peas from your garden or store. If using frozen peas, thaw them and dry them with paper towels.

Step 1: Wash the peas thoroughly under running water and drain them in the colander.

Step 2: Remove any remaining stems and pods using a sharp knife or scissors.

Step 3: Blanch the peas in boiling water for 1-2 minutes to stop enzyme activity and ensure preservation.

Step 4: Drain the peas and shock them in ice water.

Step 5: Transfer the peas to a bowl and dry them carefully using paper towels.

Step 6: Arrange the peas in a single layer on the dehydrator trays.

Step 7: Set the temperature of the dehydrator to 125°F (52°C).

Step 8: Dehydrate the peas for 6-10 hours, or until they are completely dry and brittle. The time depends on the size and thickness of the peas.

Step 9: Allow the peas to cool to room temperature.

Step 10: Store the dried peas in an airtight container or Ziploc bags.

Tips

- Store the dried peas in a cool, dark, and dry area such as a pantry or cupboard.
- To add flavor, you can season the peas before or after drying them.



Potential Challenges

It is important not to overcook or undercook the peas. Overcooked or mushy peas won't dehydrate well, while undercooked peas will be hard and difficult to dry. Avoid adding oil or fats when seasoning, as this can lead to spoilage. Finally, make sure to check the peas frequently and rotate the trays to ensure they dry evenly.



Dehydrate Green Beans

Ingredients:

- Fresh green beans
- Salt (optional)

Instructions:

1. Select fresh green beans that are free of blemishes, mold, and discoloration. The best beans for dehydration are young and tender.
2. Wash the green beans thoroughly under running water and pat dry with a clean towel.
3. Remove the ends of the green beans and cut them into equal-sized pieces. You can either cut them into bite-sized pieces or slice them lengthwise.
4. If you want to season the green beans, sprinkle a pinch of salt over them and toss to evenly coat. You can also add other seasonings of your choice, such as garlic powder, onion powder, or dried herbs.
5. Preheat your dehydrator to 135°F (57°C), which is the ideal temperature for dehydrating green beans.
6. Arrange the green beans in a single layer on the dehydrator trays, making sure the pieces don't touch or overlap. Leave space between the beans to allow for air circulation.
7. Place the trays in the dehydrator and let them dry for 8-10 hours, or until the green beans are brittle and snap easily when bent.
8. Once the green beans are fully dehydrated, let them cool to room temperature before storing them in an airtight container. You can also store them in vacuum-sealed bags for maximum freshness.



Tips

- For the best results, use fresh green beans that are in season and locally grown.
- Blanching the green beans for 3-5 minutes before dehydrating can help preserve their color and texture.
- To speed up the drying time, you can blanch the green beans, pat them dry, and then briefly freeze them before placing them in the dehydrator.
- To rehydrate the green beans, soak them in water for 30 minutes to an hour, or until they are plump and tender.

Recipe Ideas

- Seasoned green beans: Mix together salt, garlic powder, and onion powder in a small bowl. Sprinkle the seasoning over the green beans before dehydrating.
- Spicy green beans: Toss the green beans with chili powder, cumin, and smoked paprika before dehydrating.
- Green bean chips: Slice the green beans thinly and season with salt and pepper before dehydrating. The result is crispy, crunchy chips that are perfect for snacking.
- Green bean trail mix: Add dehydrated green beans to a mix of nuts, seeds, and dried fruit for a healthy and satisfying snack on the go.
- Green bean stir-fry: Rehydrate the green beans and use them in a stir-fry with other vegetables, rice, and protein of your choice.

Dehydrate Corn

Dehydrating fresh corn is a great way to preserve it for use in soups, stews, chili, salads, and other recipes. It is also an excellent snack on its own, especially when flavored with different seasonings.

1. Choose the right corn: Select fresh, ripe corn that is firm, plump, and free from bruises or decay. Sweet corn is the best type for dehydrating, as it has a higher sugar content and lower starch content, making it easier to dry.
2. Prepare the corn: Shuck the corn and remove the silk. Wash the corn to remove any dirt or debris. Cut the kernels off the cob using a sharp knife. You can also use a corn stripper or a corn cutter to make the job easier and faster. To ensure even drying, try to cut the kernels in uniform size and thickness.
3. Blanch the corn: Blanch the corn in boiling water for 3-5 minutes, then plunge it into ice water to stop the cooking process. Blanching helps to preserve the color, texture, and flavor of the corn, and also removes any bacteria or germs that might be present.
4. Dry the corn: Drain the corn and spread it out into a single layer on the dehydrator trays. Make sure to leave enough space between the kernels to allow air to circulate. Set the dehydrator to 125°F and let the corn dry for 8-12 hours, or until it is completely dry and crisp. Check the corn regularly and rotate the trays if needed to ensure even drying.
5. Store the corn: Once the corn is dry, let it cool completely before storing it in an airtight container or a Ziplock bag. You can also vacuum-seal it for longer shelf life.

Keep the dehydrated corn in a cool, dry, and dark place, away from heat, moisture, and light. Properly stored, dehydrated corn can last up to 1 year.

Different Seasoning Options and Recipe Ideas

Dehydrated corn is a versatile ingredient that can be flavored with different seasonings to suit your taste preferences.

Try some of these seasoning options and recipe ideas:

- Salt and pepper: Sprinkle the dehydrated corn with salt and pepper for a simple and classic flavor. You can also add a dash of chili powder or paprika for a smoky or spicy taste.
- Taco seasoning: Mix the dehydrated corn with taco seasoning for a fiesta flavor. Use it as a topping for nachos, tacos, or salads, or as a filling for burritos or quesadillas.
- Garlic and herb: Toss the dehydrated corn with garlic powder, onion powder, and dried herbs, such as oregano, thyme, or rosemary. This makes a great addition to pasta dishes, casseroles, or vegetable soups.
- Sweet and savory: Combine the dehydrated corn with brown sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg for a sweet and savory flavor. Use it as a topping for oatmeal, yogurt, or ice cream, or as a snack on its own.
- Cornbread: Grind the dehydrated corn into cornmeal and use it to make cornbread, muffins, or pancakes.
- Soup: Add the dehydrated corn to soups, stews, or chili for a hearty and flavorful boost. It rehydrates quickly in hot liquid and adds texture and sweetness to the dish.

Dehydrate Peppers

Dehydrated peppers can be used in many dishes, including soups, stews, chili, pizza, and salads.

Types of Peppers Suitable for Dehydration

There are several types of peppers suitable for dehydration, including hot peppers and sweet peppers. The ideal pepper for dehydration should have a thick skin, a firm texture, and a low water content. Some of the most popular peppers for dehydration include:

- Jalapeno peppers
- Anaheim peppers
- Cayenne peppers
- Habanero peppers
- Bell peppers
- Poblano peppers

Ideal Hydration Levels for Peppers

To ensure effective dehydration, it is crucial to confirm that the peppers are in good shape and do not have any deformities that can result in moisture retention. Most peppers have a water content of approximately 90%, but they need to have around 10% water content to be dehydrated. Also, if you intend to store the dehydrated peppers for more extended periods, consider dehydrating to a lower moisture content.

Step 1: Wash the peppers and remove the stem and seeds. You can either leave them whole or cut them into thin slices or rings.

Step 2: Arrange the peppers on the drying trays such that the pieces do not touch each other. The spacing allows even air circulation around every part and assures uniform drying.

Step 3: If you are using a dehydrator machine, follow the manufacturer's specific instructions on how to operate the machine. The suggested temperature for dehydrating peppers is between 125°F and 135°F. The dehydrating process should take about six to eight hours.

Step 4: If you are using the sun method, spread the peppers out on a clean, dry surface in a sunny spot, ensuring that the area is free from dust or flies. Cover the peppers with cheesecloth or mosquito netting to keep insects, debris, and animals away. The sun-drying process will take approximately five to seven days. Ensure to turn them occasionally so that all pieces get direct sunlight.

Step 5: The dehydrated peppers will be brittle and crunchier to the touch. Take a piece and check that there is no moisture retained in the flesh. If you spot any moisture, return it to the dehydrator and continue the drying process.

Common Pitfalls

Some common pitfalls to watch out for when dehydrating peppers include:

- Not cleaning the peppers well before dehydrating
- Cutting the peppers too thin
- Not using gloves when handling hot peppers
- Overcrowding of peppers on the drying trays, leading to uneven drying

Dehydrate Rabbit

1. Select the Best Cuts of Meat: Before you start dehydrating rabbit meat, it's important to choose the right cuts. The best options for dehydrating rabbit meat include back legs, loins, and saddle meat.
2. Prepare the Meat: Once you have selected the rabbit meat you want to dehydrate, place it in a sink and rinse it with cold water. Remove any excess fat or muscle tissue that you do not want to keep. When the meat is clean and trimmed, pat it dry with paper towels.
3. Cut the Meat into Strips: Using a sharp knife, cut the meat into strips about 1/4 inch thick. Try to make the slices as uniform as possible to ensure even dehydration.
4. Marinate the Meat: Marinating the meat is optional, but it can add flavor and moisture to the finished product. You can use a variety of marinades, such as soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, or your favorite spices.
5. Dehydrate the Meat: Lay the strips of rabbit meat on the dehydrator trays, making sure to leave enough space between them to allow for proper airflow. Set the dehydrator to 160°F and let the meat dry for 4 to 6 hours. The dehydrating time may vary based on the thickness of the meat and the humidity level of your environment.
6. Check for Dryness. It should be hard and brittle to the touch, but not so dry that it snaps upon bending. If it's still moist, return the meat back to the dehydrator.
7. Once the rabbit meat is fully dehydrated, cool for 15 minutes before storing it. Place it in an airtight container and store it in a cool, dry place.



Tips

- Avoid using meat that has a lot of fat as it can spoil the meat.
- If you're using a marinade, make sure to pat the meat dry before dehydrating it to avoid any dripping.
- To keep the meat from sticking to the dehydrator trays, try applying cooking spray to the surface before placing the meat on top.
- Keep an eye on the meat to ensure it is not getting over-dried or overly cooked, as this can result in a burnt and unpalatable taste.
- For an added flavor, try sprinkling herbs or spices over the meat before dehydrating it.



Dehydrate Venison

Step 1: Choose the Right Cuts of Meat

When it comes to dehydrating venison, it's important to choose the right cuts of meat. Avoid using tougher cuts like rump roast or stew meat, as they can be difficult to chew and texture may become tough when dehydrated. Instead, opt for tender cuts like the backstrap or tenderloin.

Step 2: Trim the Meat

Remove any visible fat or silver skin from the meat, as it can become rancid during dehydration. Trim away any bone or gristle as well.

Step 3: Cut the Meat into Thin Strips

The key to successful dehydrating is to slice the meat evenly and in thin strips, about 1/8 inch thick. This will help ensure that the meat dehydrates evenly.

Step 4: Marinate the Meat

To enhance the flavor of the venison, marinate it for at least 12 to 24 hours before dehydrating. You can use a pre-made marinade or create your own by combining ingredients like Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, onion powder, garlic powder, and black pepper.

Step 5: Dehydrate the Meat

Preheat your dehydrator to 145°F. Arrange the meat strips on the dehydrator trays, making sure that they do not overlap. Allow the meat to dehydrate for 6-12 hours or until it is dry and leathery to the touch. You can test for doneness by bending a piece of the dried meat; it should crack but not break. Rotate the trays every few hours to ensure even dehydration.



Step 6: Store the Dried Venison

Store the dried venison in an airtight container or vacuum seal it to prevent moisture from getting in. You can store it in the pantry for up to six months or in the freezer for up to a year.

Tips and Safety Precautions:

- Be sure to handle the meat carefully and use clean utensils when preparing it for dehydration.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before handling the meat to avoid cross-contamination.
- It is important to dehydrate the meat at the correct temperature to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Do not dehydrate the meat at a temperature below 145°F.
- Do not marinate the meat at room temperature; always marinate in the refrigerator.
- If the meat has any off odors or appears slimy during dehydration, discard it immediately.

Dehydrate Chicken

Dehydrating chicken is an excellent way to preserve it for long periods, and it can also be a convenient way to make tasty, protein-packed snacks for on-the-go.

Equipment and Supplies Needed:

- Chicken breast or thighs (boneless and skinless)
- A sharp knife or meat slicer
- Dehydrator or oven
- Non-stick baking sheet or dehydrator trays
- Airtight storage containers or vacuum-sealed bags

Step 1: Prepare the chicken

- Wash the chicken breasts or thighs thoroughly and pat them dry with a paper towel.
- Cut the meat into thin, even slices using a sharp knife or meat slicer. Aim for slices that are about 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick.
- Season the chicken with your desired spices and seasoning. Some popular options include salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, smoked paprika or chili powder.

Step 2: Dehydrate the chicken

- If you have a dehydrator, arrange the chicken slices on the dehydrator trays, leaving enough space between each slice to allow for air circulation.
 - Set the dehydrator to 165°F(75°C) and allow the chicken to dehydrate for 4-6 hours until it is dry and leathery.
- If you don't have a dehydrator, preheat your oven to the lowest temperature (around 150°F-170°F or 65°C-75°C) and place the chicken slices on a non-stick baking sheet



- Put the chicken in the oven and prop open the oven door with a wooden spoon or mitten to allow air circulation.
- Check the chicken every 30 minutes to ensure it is not getting too dark or overcooked. Rotate the tray to ensure even drying.

Step 3: Store the dehydrated chicken

- Once the chicken is fully dried, remove it from the dehydrator or oven and let it cool completely at room temperature.
- Store the dehydrated chicken in an airtight container or vacuum-sealed bag to keep it fresh for up to six months.
- Properly dehydrated chicken should have lost all moisture and will break apart easily. If you notice any signs of moisture or softness, you will need to continue the dehydrating process for an additional hour or two.
- For a snack, you can enjoy it as it is, or you can rehydrate the chicken when ready to serve by adding it to a little hot water and let it soak for 30 minutes to an hour.
- To rehydrate the chicken quickly, you can add it to a pan with a little oil and toss until the chicken is fully moisturized.



Dehydrate Gravy

Step 1: Prepare the Gravy

Start by preparing your gravy as you usually would. If you don't have a favorite recipe, you can easily make one using stock, flour, and seasonings. Be sure to remove any lumps so that the gravy is smooth and even.

Step 2: Cook the Gravy

Cook the gravy as you usually would, ensuring that it is heated to a temperature of at least 165°F to eliminate any harmful bacteria.

Step 3: Dehydrate the Gravy

Once the gravy is cooked and heated, transfer it to the food dehydrator. Spread it out evenly on the dehydrator trays, ensuring that there are no lumps. Turn on the dehydrator and set the temperature to 140°F-160°F. Allow it to dehydrate for 8-12 hours or until it is completely dry and brittle.



Step 4: Store the Dehydrated Gravy
Once the gravy is completely dehydrated, store it in an airtight container or a vacuum-sealed bag to prevent moisture and spoilage. Be sure to label the container with the date and type of gravy for easy reference.

Alternative Dehydration Method:

If you don't have a food dehydrator, you can use your oven to dehydrate the gravy. Simply spread the gravy out onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, and then bake it in the oven at a low temperature of about 140°F-160°F for 8-12 hours or until it is completely dry.

Creative Uses for Dehydrated Gravy:

One of the best things about dehydrated gravy is its versatility. Here are some creative ways to use it:

- Add it to soups or stews to enhance their flavor and improve their texture.
- Mix it with water to create an instant gravy mix that can be used in casseroles, gravies, and more.
- Use it as a seasoning for meat or vegetables to add a rich, savory flavor.
- Crumble the dehydrated gravy and use it as a topping for mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, or casseroles.

With these simple steps, you can easily dehydrate gravy and enjoy it in many new and interesting ways.

Make Beef Jerky in the Dehydrator

Making jerky is a fun and easy way to preserve meat for a tasty snack or meal. Here are step-by-step instructions for making jerky in a dehydrator for beginners:

Ingredients:

- 1-2 lbs of lean beef, such as flank steak, sirloin, or round steak
- Marinade of choice (here is a simple recipe: 1/3 cup soy sauce, 1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce, 1/4 cup brown sugar, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp onion powder)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: liquid smoke, hot sauce, herbs or spices

Instructions:

1. Choose the right cut of meat. Look for lean cuts of beef that are low in fat and connective tissue, such as flank steak, sirloin, or round steak.
2. Slice the meat against the grain. This means cutting perpendicular to the long muscle fibers, which will produce a more tender jerky. Aim for slices about 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch thick, depending on your preference.
3. Marinate the meat. Combine all the marinade ingredients in a ziplock bag or container with a tight-fitting lid. Add the meat slices and toss to coat evenly. Marinate for at least 4-8 hours, or overnight in the fridge.

4. Remove excess marinade and seasonings from the meat. Pat the slices dry with paper towels, and sprinkle salt and pepper to taste. You can also add more seasonings or liquids at this point, such as liquid smoke, hot sauce, or herbs.

5. Preheat the dehydrator. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for your dehydrator, and set the temperature to 160-165°F. Allow the dehydrator to preheat for 10-15 minutes.

6. Arrange the meat slices on the dehydrator trays. Make sure the slices aren't touching each other, and leave some space between them for air circulation.

7. Dehydrate the meat. Set the timer for 4-6 hours, depending on the thickness of your slices and desired texture. Check the jerky periodically and rotate the trays if necessary to ensure even drying. The jerky is done when it's dry and firm, but still slightly pliable. It shouldn't feel moist or rubbery.

8. Let the jerky cool before storing. Once the jerky is done, let it cool to room temperature before storing in an airtight container, such as a ziplock bag or mason jar. The jerky can be kept in the fridge for up to 3 weeks, or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

Tips and Tricks:

- Use a sharp knife to slice the meat as thin and even as possible.
- Freeze the meat for a few hours before slicing to make it easier to handle.
- Experiment with different marinades and seasonings to customize the flavor of your jerky.
- For a chewier texture, slice the meat against the grain and leave more moisture in the jerky. For a crispier texture, slice the meat with the grain and dry it longer.
- Avoid using meat with a lot of fat, as it will go rancid and spoil quickly.
- Make sure the dehydrator trays are clean and dry before use, and don't overload them with too much meat.
- Don't let the meat dry out too much, or it will become brittle and tough to eat.
- If you're worried about bacteria, you can preheat the meat in the oven to 160°F for 5-10 minutes before dehydrating to kill any potential pathogens.



Make Fruit Leather In A Dehydrator

Step-by-Step Guide: How to Make Delicious and Healthy Fruit Leather Using a Dehydrator

Benefits of Making Fruit Leather in a Dehydrator

Making fruit leather in a dehydrator is a great way to enjoy a healthy and delicious snack. Unlike traditional fruit snacks, fruit leather doesn't have any added sugars or preservatives, making it a great option for those looking to eat healthier. Additionally, making fruit leather in a dehydrator is an easy and cost-effective way to preserve fruits that are in season or being over-ripened.

Fruits that Work Best for Fruit Leather

When making fruit leather, it's important to choose fruits that are high in natural sugars, low in water content, and have a firm texture. Some of the best fruits for making fruit leather include:

- Apples
- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Mangoes
- Pineapple
- Peaches
- Pears

Preparing the Fruits

Before you begin making the fruit leather, it's important to prepare the fruits properly. Wash and remove any stems, seeds, and pits as needed. Then, cut the fruits into small pieces and puree them in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Ingredients and Equipment Needed:

- 3 cups of pureed fruit
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon of honey (optional)
- Non-stick dehydrator sheets
- Dehydrator with a temperature control function
- Food processor or blender

Directions:

1. Prepare the pureed fruit by washing, cutting, and pureeing the fruits in a blender or food processor.
2. If desired, add honey and lemon juice to the pureed fruit and blend well. This will help to enhance the taste and preserve the fruit leather.
3. Line a dehydrator tray with a non-stick sheet.
4. Pour the pureed fruit mixture onto the tray and spread it evenly. Use a spatula to smooth out any lumps.
5. Set the temperature on your dehydrator to 135°F and turn it on.

6. Let the fruit leather dry for 6-8 hours or until the texture is no longer sticky to touch.

7. Once finished, remove the fruit leather from the dehydrator and cut it into strips using scissors or a knife.

8. Roll up the strips and store them in an airtight container. Fruit leather can stay fresh for up to one month when stored properly.

Tips and Tricks:

- If the fruit mixture is too thick to spread easily on the sheet, add small amounts of water to thin out the mixture.
- For a variation without honey, use sweetened apple sauce or other sweeteners of your choice.
- For a variation with a different flavor, add spices or herbs such as cinnamon, vanilla extract, or mint.

Serving Suggestions:

Fruit leather can be enjoyed as a healthy snack on its own or used as a topping for yogurt, oatmeal, or granola. It can also be used as a base for homemade energy bars, mixed with nuts and seeds. Store Recommendations:

It is recommended to store fruit leather in an airtight container at room temperature. You can also freeze the fruit leather for longer storage. Avoid storing the fruit leather in humid areas, as it can cause the fruit leather to become too soft or moldy.



Dehydrate Vegetable Soup

Step 1: Choose your vegetables

Begin by selecting the vegetables you'd like to dehydrate and use for your soup. Some ideal options include carrots, celery, onions, potatoes, and peas.

Step 2: Prepare the vegetables

Clean, slice, and dice the vegetables into small, consistent pieces. This will help ensure that they dry evenly.

Step 3: Cook the soup

Next, cook your soup as you usually would, following your preferred recipe. Allow the soup to cool to room temperature before moving on to the next step.

Step 4: Puree the soup

Using a hand blender or food processor, puree the soup until it's smooth, making sure to remove any large chunks or pieces of vegetables.

Step 5: Preheat the dehydrator

Now, preheat your dehydrator to between 125 and 135 degrees Fahrenheit. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for your specific model.



Step 6: Spread the puree on the dehydrator tray
Using a spoon or spatula, spread the pureed soup evenly onto a dehydrator tray that's been lined with parchment or silicone.

Step 7: Dehydrate the soup

Place the tray into the dehydrator and let it dry for 8-10 hours. Check on the soup from time to time to ensure it's drying evenly.

Step 8: Store the dehydrated soup

Once the soup is fully dehydrated, remove it from the dehydrator and let it cool to room temperature. Store the dried soup in an airtight container, like a Mason jar or a vacuum-sealed bag, in a cool, dry place.

Step 9: Rehydrate the soup

When you're ready to eat the dehydrated soup, simply add it to a pot of boiling water and stir well. Allow it to simmer for 10-15 minutes, and the soup will rehydrate into a delicious, nourishing meal.

Dehydrate Ham

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of cooked ham (boneless)
- Salt
- Other desired seasonings (pepper, garlic powder etc)

Tools:

- Dehydrator (electric or solar)
- Kitchen thermometer

Steps:

1. Choose your ham - The best ham to dehydrate is boneless cooked ham. You can use ham that you have cooked at home or buy one from the supermarket.
2. Cut the ham into small pieces - Cut the ham into small pieces, around 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch thick.
3. Seasoning the Ham - Season the ham with salt and other desired seasonings to taste.
4. Preheat the dehydrator - Before you start dehydrating, preheat your dehydrator to around 140 degrees Fahrenheit.
5. Evenly place the ham on the dehydrator trays - Arrange the ham evenly on the dehydrator trays with enough space between each piece to allow for good air circulation.

6. Dehydrate the ham - Turn on the dehydrator and let the ham dry until it is crispy and brittle. This can take around 7-10 hours at 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

7. Check the temperature - As the ham dries, you will want to occasionally monitor the temperature inside the dehydrator to make sure it is not getting too hot. A good way to do this is to use a kitchen thermometer.

8. Store the dehydrated ham - Once the ham is completely dry and crispy, remove it from the dehydrator and store it in an airtight container. Store it in a cool, dry place until ready to use.

Safety Precautions:

- Always make sure your hands, cutting boards, and utensils are clean to avoid cross-contamination.
- Handling the ham should be done with clean hands or gloves.
- Follow safe food handling practices when thawing and cooking meat.
- Always make sure cooked ham is at a safe temperature before dehydrating.

Dehydrating ham is a great way to preserve leftovers or add variety to your pantry staples. Following the above steps carefully and you will get some delicious and flavorful ham to store and use for many days to come. Remember to store it in a cool, dry place and use it within the recommended shelf life. Enjoy!

Dehydrate Steak

Step 1: Prep the Steak

Choose a steak that is about 1/4 inch thick, the thinner it is, the easier it will be to dehydrate. Trim any excess fat, and slice the steak into thin strips, less than 1/4 inch in thickness. For a better texture, freeze the steaks for up to 2 hours, then remove from the freezer and thinly slice or shred it.

Step 2: Marination (Optional Step)

You can marinate your steak in your favorite marinade for at least 30 minutes or overnight, to enhance the flavor. This step is optional but recommended for the best results.

Step 3: Load the Dehydrator Trays

Place the thin slices of steak in a single layer on the dehydrator trays, leaving a small space between pieces so that the air can circulate. Do not overcrowd the trays or let the meat touch one another.

Step 4: Set the Temperature and Time

Set your dehydrator at 160°F to 165°F, which is the recommended temperature for drying meat. You can also set the timer for up to 6-8 hours or until it is completely dry.



Step 5: Check the Steak Periodically

Throughout the drying process, check the steak periodically. It is normal for it to shrink considerably and harden up as it dries. When the steak is ready, it should be tough enough to break but still slightly pliable to touch. If the meat is soft or still moist, it isn't done yet. If it becomes too brittle, then it may have overdried, and it's not ideal.

Step 6: Store the Dehydrated Steak Strips

Once fully dried, remove the steak strips from the dehydrator and let them cool completely. Store them in an airtight container, Ziploc bags or vacuum sealed bags. In this way, they will last for months when stored in a cool, dry, and dark place.

Extra Tips:

- Use a lean cut of steak.
- Make sure to cut the steak into equal-sized pieces for even drying.
- Dehydrating time may vary depending on the thickness of the slices and the moisture content.
- Don't forget to clean your dehydrator after use to ensure it lasts longer.

Dehydrate Hamburger

Dehydrating hamburger meat for backpacking and camping trips is a great way to preserve the meat and make it more lightweight, compact, and easier to carry. Here are the step-by-step instructions on how to dehydrate hamburger meat for your next outdoor adventure:

Materials Needed:

- Hamburger meat (lean ground beef, turkey, or chicken)
- Dehydrator
- Skillet or frying pan
- Paper towels
- Jerky gun (optional)
- Seasonings (salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, etc.)
- Airtight container or vacuum sealer bags

Safety Precautions:

- Make sure the hamburger meat is fresh and of good quality.
- Use clean utensils, cutting board, and hands to avoid contamination.
- Cook the meat thoroughly before dehydrating to minimize the risk of foodborne illness.
- Follow the dehydrator's instructions and safety guidelines.

Steps:

1. Prepare the hamburger meat by removing any excess fat, connective tissues, or gristle. If using turkey or chicken, remove the skin and bones.

2. Cook the hamburger meat in a skillet or frying pan until it is fully browned and no pink color remains. Drain any excess grease.

3. If desired, season the cooked meat with salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, or other spices to enhance the flavor.

4. Let the cooked meat cool down for a few minutes. Use paper towels to pat dry any remaining moisture.

5. If using a jerky gun, fill it with the cooked meat and squeeze out thin strips onto the dehydrator trays. If not, spread the meat onto the trays in a thin, even layer, avoiding any clumps or overlap.

6. Set the dehydrator to a temperature of 145-155°F (63-68°C), and let it run for 6-8 hours or until the meat is dry and brittle.

7. Once the meat is fully dehydrated, let it cool down to room temperature. Then, store it in an airtight container or vacuum seal it in bags for later use.

Seasoning and Preparation:

To use the dehydrated hamburger meat in soups, stews, and other dishes, simply rehydrate it by adding boiling water or broth and letting it soak for a few minutes until it becomes tender and plump. You can also add the dehydrated meat directly to the dish and let it rehydrate while cooking. Add extra flavor and variety, you can also season the dehydrated meat with different spices or marinades before dehydrating.

Dehydrate Lettuce

Dehydrating lettuce is an excellent way to preserve this healthy, leafy vegetable. The dehydrated lettuce can be stored for a very long time, and it can be added to a variety of recipes for an added crunch, flavor, and nutritional value.

1. Clean and wash the lettuce thoroughly in cold water to remove any dirt or debris. Shake the excess water off or pat it dry with a towel.
2. Arrange the lettuce leaves in a single layer on the dehydrator trays. Make sure they are not overlapping.
3. Set the food dehydrator to 125°F (or the recommended temperature in your machine) and turn it on.
4. Leave the lettuce in the dehydrator for 6-8 hours, or until fully dry and crispy. You can check on it periodically to see how it's doing and to make sure it's drying evenly.
5. Once the lettuce is completely dehydrated, take it out of the dehydrator and let it cool down for a few minutes.
6. Place the dehydrated lettuce in an airtight container or resealable plastic bag. Store it in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.

Dehydrating lettuce has several benefits, including:

1. Prolongs the shelf life and prevents food waste.
2. Makes it easier to pack and transport lettuce.
3. Concentrates the flavor and enhances the taste of lettuce. Adds a crispy and crunchy texture to sandwiches, salads, and soups.

Properly Storing Dehydrated Lettuce:

To ensure that dehydrated lettuce stays fresh and crisp for a long time, it's important to store it properly. Here are some tips on how to store it:

1. Store dehydrated lettuce in an airtight container or resealable plastic bag to protect it from moisture and humidity.
2. Keep the container or bag in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight, heat, or dampness.
3. Use a desiccant packet or a piece of bread in the container to absorb any moisture that may sneak in.
4. Label the container or bag with the date of dehydration for easy tracking.

Creative Ways to Use Dehydrated Lettuce:

Dehydrated lettuce can be used in a variety of recipes to add crunch, flavor, and nutrition. Here are some creative ways to use it:

1. Add dehydrated lettuce to soups or stews for an added crunch and texture.
2. Toss it into salads for extra flavor and nutrition.
3. Use it as a DIY salad mix with other dehydrated veggies and fruits for a quick and healthy meal.
4. Use dehydrated lettuce as a topping for pizzas, sandwiches, or tacos.
5. Grind it into a powder and mix it with other spices to create a flavorful seasoning blend.

Use fresh and crisp lettuce for the best results. Avoid using wilted or old lettuce, as it may not dehydrate well.

Rotate the trays in the dehydrator periodically to ensure even drying. Store lettuce in an airtight container.

Dehydrate Onions

Step 1: Choose the right onions.

Select fresh, firm onions that are free of blemishes or soft spots. The best onion varieties for dehydration are yellow onions or red onions because of their high sugar and low water content.

Step 2: Prepare the onions.

Peel the onions with a sharp knife, and then slice them thinly, either by hand or with a mandoline, into uniform slices. You can also chop the onions into small, consistent pieces if that's what you prefer.

Step 3: Preheat your dehydrator or oven.

If you're using a dehydrator, turn it on and preheat it to around 125°F (50°C) for an even and gentle drying process. For an oven, preheat it to 150-200°F (65-93°C), depending on your oven's minimum temperature.

Step 4: Dehydrate the onions.

Spread the sliced onions out on the dehydrator trays, leaving space between the pieces to facilitate air circulation. If using an oven, place the onions on a baking sheet and spread them evenly. Don't stack the onions or allow the pieces to overlap.

Step 5: Flip the onions.

At some point during the dehydration process, carefully flip the onions over so that they dry evenly on both sides. The onions will be ready in 6-12 hours, depending on the thickness of the slices and the dehydration equipment used.

Step 6: Check the onions for doneness.

The onions are done when they are completely dry and brittle to the touch. You can also taste a small piece to make sure it's fully dried. Once finished, turn off the dehydrator/oven.

Step 7: Store the dehydrated onions.

Place the onion slices in an airtight container, and store them in a cool, dry place where they will be protected from light and humidity. You can also store them in a vacuum-sealed bag or jar to keep them fresh for longer periods.

Step 8: Rehydrate the onions.

To rehydrate the onions, simply soak them in warm water for a few minutes. Once hydrated, you can use them like fresh onions.

Potential health benefits:

Dehydrated onions provide many beneficial nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. The drying process also helps to concentrate some of these nutrients. They are also low in calories and high in fiber.

Culinary applications:

Dehydrated onions can be used in a wide range of dishes such as soups, stews, sauces, dips, and marinades. They add a depth of flavor to savory dishes and can also be rehydrated and used for onion rings, casseroles, and stir-fried dishes.



Dehydrate Green Onions

Tools and Ingredients Needed:

- Fresh green onions
- Sharp knife or scissors
- Dehydrator or oven
- Baking sheet (if using an oven)
- Airtight containers or jars for storage

Steps:

1. Clean and rinse the green onions thoroughly under cold running water. Pat dry with a kitchen towel or paper towels.
2. Trim off the root end and any wilted or discolored parts of the green onions.
3. Cut the green onions into small pieces, about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length. You can use a sharp knife or kitchen scissors to do this.
4. Spread the sliced green onions evenly in a single layer on the dehydrator tray or baking sheet lined with parchment paper (if using an oven).
5. Set the dehydrator to 125F or the oven to 150F and let it dry for about 6-8 hours until the onions are completely dry and brittle. Check them occasionally and rotate the trays to ensure even drying.
6. Remove the dried green onions from the dehydrator or oven and let them cool for a few minutes.

Tips and tricks:

- Peel the onions over a sink or bowl of water to help reduce the fumes and tears.
- A mandoline can help you to create uniform onion slices much more quickly than by hand, but be very careful when using it as the blades are very sharp.
- Make sure the onion slices are not too thick, around $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3mm) is perfect.
- Season the onions with salt, pepper, or vinegar before dehydrating to add extra flavor.
- To get even more flavor, try dehydrating garlic with the onions.
- Store dehydrated onions separate from other spices or herbs as they may absorb each other's flavors.

7. Transfer the dehydrated onions to a clean and dry airtight container or jar. Label and date them for future use.
8. Store the dehydrated green onions in a cool, dark, and dry place such as a pantry or cupboard. They can last for up to 1 year if stored properly.

Tips:

- Choose fresh and firm green onions for best results.
- If using an oven, keep the door slightly open to allow air circulation and prevent overheating.
- To rehydrate the dried onions, soak them in warm water for about 10-15 minutes before using them in cooking.
- Dehydrated green onions are great for adding flavor and crunch to soups, stews, salads, dips, and other dishes. They also make a tasty and healthy snack on their own.
- You can experiment with different herbs and spices such as garlic powder, paprika, or cumin to customize the flavor of your dehydrated green onions.





Dehydrate Cabbage

Dehydrating cabbage is a simple and effective way to preserve this nutrient and vitamin-packed cruciferous vegetable for long-term storage. Here are step-by-step instructions on how to dehydrate cabbage while ensuring maximum flavor and nutrition retention:

Selecting The Best Cabbage:

- Choose fresh, crisp, unblemished cabbage heads with tight, compact leaves.
- Avoid any heads with cuts, bruises, or soft spots, as they won't dehydrate well and might spoil more easily.

Preparing Cabbage For Dehydration:

- Rinse the cabbage heads under cold water and pat them dry with paper towels.
- Remove outer leaves and discard any damaged ones.
- Cut the cabbage into thin, uniform slices or shreds, using a sharp knife, mandolin, or food processor.
- If desired, blanch the cabbage slices in boiling water for 1-2 minutes to help preserve color, texture, and flavor.

Storing Dehydrated Cabbage:

- Allow the dehydrated cabbage to cool down completely before storing it in airtight containers, such as glass jars or plastic bags.
- Label the containers with the date and contents, and store them in a cool, dry, dark place, away from moisture and light.
- If properly dehydrated and stored, cabbage can last for up to a year without losing its taste or nutritional value.

Rehydrating And Using Dehydrated Cabbage:

- Soak the cabbage slices in warm water or broth for 10-15 minutes before using them in recipes that require some moisture, such as soups, stews, or casseroles.
- Add the dry cabbage flakes or powder directly to dishes like salads, coleslaw, or sandwiches, without rehydrating them.
- Grind the dehydrated cabbage into a fine powder and use it as a seasoning or a thickener in sauces, dressings, or dips.
- Use rehydrated cabbage to make a nutritious and quick stir-fry with other vegetables and meat.
- Make a crunchy and flavorful slaw by mixing dry cabbage powder with mayonnaise or yogurt, chopped apples or dried fruits, and nuts or seeds.
- Add dehydrated cabbage powder to vegetable smoothies or juices.

Dehydrate Bananas

Step 1: Choosing the right bananas

Choose ripe, but firm, bananas for dehydrating. Overripe bananas will become too mushy during the drying process, while unripe bananas will not have enough sweetness.

Step 2: Preparing the bananas for dehydration

Peel the bananas and slice them into uniform ¼ inch rounds. Try to make them as even as possible to ensure they all dry at the same rate.

Step 3: Setting up the dehydrator

Place each slice of banana onto the dehydrator tray, leaving a little space between each piece. Make sure that the tray is not too crowded, as it will affect the airflow and drying time.

Place the trays into the dehydrator.

Step 4: Monitoring the drying process

Set the dehydrator temperature to 135°F (57°C) and leave it running for 6-9 hours. The bananas are ready when they are dry and chewy, but not crunchy. Check them every hour or so until they reach the desired texture.

Step 5: Flavoring and storing the dehydrated bananas

Once the bananas are dehydrated, you can add some spices or flavorings to give them extra flavor, such as cinnamon or cocoa powder. Store them in an airtight container or bag in a cool, dry place. They should last for several months.

Step 6: Creative ways to use dehydrated bananas

Dehydrated bananas are a great snack on their own, but you can also use them in recipes such as:

- Smoothies: Add some dehydrated bananas to your morning smoothie for extra sweetness and texture
- Granola bars: Mix some dehydrated bananas into homemade granola bars for an added boost of energy
- Trail mix: Combine dehydrated bananas with nuts and seeds for a healthy, on-the-go snack.

Tips and tricks:

- Sprinkle lemon juice over the sliced bananas before dehydrating to help prevent discoloration.
- Keep an eye on the bananas during the last hour of drying as they can quickly go from perfect to over-dried.
- If you don't have a food dehydrator, you can use an oven at a low temperature as an alternative.

Dehydrate Apples

Dehydrating apples is a great way to preserve them while retaining their flavor and nutritional qualities. It also makes for a convenient snack or ingredient to add to various dishes. Below are the steps for dehydrating apples for optimal preservation and taste:

Benefits of dehydrating apples:

- Increased shelf life
- Concentrated flavor
- Retains nutrients

Step 1: Selecting and preparing the apples

- Choose firm and ripe apples that are free from bruises or any signs of rot
- Wash the apples thoroughly
- Core the apples and slice them into evenly-sized pieces
- Optionally, dip the apple slices in lemon juice to prevent browning

Step 2: Best methods for dehydrating apples

- Using an oven: Preheat your oven to 145°F (63°C). Place the apple slices on a parchment-lined baking sheet and put them in the oven for 6-8 hours. Flip the slices occasionally to allow for even dehydration. Check them for their crunchy texture to know when they're done.



Place the prepared apple slices in a single layer on the dehydrator trays. Set the temperature to 135°F (57°C) and leave to dehydrate for 6-12 hours. Flip and rotate the trays in the middle of the process to encourage even dehydration.

Step 3: Monitoring the dehydration process

- Dehydrating time can vary depending on the size of the apple slices, the moisture content of the fruit, and the drying method used.
- Check the apple slices frequently for their texture and color.
- Adjust the time and temperature according to the progress in dehydration.
- For the oven and dehydrator methods, maintain enough air circulation by opening the oven door or the dehydrator tray lids slightly.

Step 4: Storage and Use

- Store dried apples in an airtight container.
 - Use them as a healthy snack, in granola, or to spice up a salad or oatmeal.
 - Rehydrate by soaking them in water, juice or other liquids before use.
- retention.

Dehydrate Oranges or Lemons

Equipment Needed:

- Oranges or lemons
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Dehydrator
- Parchment paper or fruit leather trays (if available)
- Airtight container

Preparation Steps:

1. Select fresh and ripe oranges that are free from any bruises or blemishes. Medium to large-sized are ideal for dehydrating.
2. Wash the oranges or lemons under cold running water and pat them dry with a clean kitchen towel.
3. Slice the citrus into uniform pieces of about 1/4-inch thickness using a sharp knife.
4. Remove any seeds or pith if desired, ensuring that the slices are even in thickness.
5. Arrange the slices on the dehydrator tray, making sure they don't overlap. You can also use parchment paper or fruit leather trays to prevent sticking and make cleaning easier.

Drying Time and Temperature:

6. Set the dehydrator to a temperature of 135°F to ensure the oranges dry evenly, without becoming overly crispy or burnt.
7. Leave the slices to dry for 8-12 hours or until they feel dry and crisp to the touch, flipping them over halfway through the drying time. The drying time may vary depending on the humidity levels in your area and the thickness of the slices.

Storage Advice:

8. Once the oranges are completely dry, remove them from the dehydrator and let them cool to room temperature. Store the slices in an airtight

Tips and Tricks:

- For the best results, choose thin-skinned oranges such as Valencia, Navel, or blood oranges. Thick-skinned oranges may take longer to dry and retain more bitterness.
- You can experiment with different flavorings such as cinnamon, nutmeg, or honey to add some extra zest to your dried oranges. To test if the oranges are dry enough, break one piece in half. It should be brittle and snap easily.
- To dry orange peels to use as a seasoning or for making tea. Simply slice the peels into thin strips and dry them in the same way as the fruit.

Dehydrate Chicken Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of cooked chicken, chopped
- 1 cup of mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup of chopped celery
- 1/2 cup of chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup of chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tsp of garlic powder
- 1 tsp of dried dill
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste

Equipment:

- Dehydrator
- Parchment paper
- Mixing bowl
- Spoon
- Storage container with airtight lid

Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl, combine the chicken, mayonnaise, celery, green onions, parsley, garlic powder, dried dill, salt, and pepper.
2. Stir the chicken salad mixture until it's well combined.
3. Spread the chicken salad mixture on top of the parchment paper in a thin layer.
4. Place the parchment paper with the chicken salad mixture in the dehydrator.

5. Set the dehydrator temperature to 145°F and let it dehydrate for 8-10 hours or until the chicken salad is completely dry and brittle.

6. Once done, remove the parchment paper with the dehydrated chicken salad from the dehydrator.

7. Break the chicken salad into small pieces and place them in an airtight container.

8. Store the dehydrated chicken salad in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight.

Tips for achieving optimal results:

- Use cooked chicken that is not too juicy or moist. This will help the chicken salad to dehydrate faster and more evenly.
- Make sure the chicken salad is spread in a thin layer on top of the parchment paper. This will help it to dehydrate faster.
- Check the chicken salad periodically while it's dehydrating to make sure it's drying evenly. If needed, move the pieces around to ensure they dehydrate evenly.
- Once the chicken salad is dehydrated, store it in an airtight container to prevent moisture from reentering.

- Dehydrated chicken salad can last for up to 2 months if stored properly in an airtight container.

Modifications or variations:

- Add other ingredients like shredded carrots or chopped nuts for extra flavor and texture.
- Use different spices like paprika or cumin for a different taste.
- Use Greek yogurt instead of mayonnaise for a healthier and tangy version.
- Try adding different herbs like basil, thyme or oregano to the chicken salad.

Pitfalls to avoid:

- Using too much mayonnaise can make the chicken salad too moist and take longer to dehydrate.
- Not spreading the chicken salad mixture in a thin layer will cause it to take longer to dehydrate evenly.
- Not letting the chicken salad cool down before storing it can cause it to become moist and spoil quickly.



Dehydrate Tuna Salad

Step 1: Prepare the tuna salad

Prepare your tuna salad as you normally would. Ensure that all the ingredients are well mixed and homogenous, with no large chunks of any ingredient. You can add a bit more mayonnaise or other wet ingredients than you usually would to keep it moist during the dehydration process, but not too much that it becomes soggy.

Step 2: Spread the tuna salad on a dehydration tray

Use a spatula or spoon to spread the tuna salad in a thin, even layer on the dehydration tray. Make sure that the layer is thinly spread and not too thick. The best way to spread the tuna salad is to spoon it onto the tray in small portions, then spread it out evenly using your spatula. To avoid clumps or uneven thickness, ensure that no spot is left untouched.

Step 3: Place tray in the dehydrator

Once you have successfully spread the tuna salad over the tray, place it in the dehydrator. Ensure that the tray is level and not overly stacked so that all the pieces of tuna salad dry evenly.

Dehydrate at the lowest setting in your dehydrator until it is completely dry, which may take about 6 to 12 hours. Some dehydrators have a specific setting for making tuna jerky, so consult your manufacturer's instructions.



Step 4: Store the dehydrated tuna salad properly

Once the tuna salad is completely dry, store it in airtight jars or bags. Keep the dehydrated tuna salad in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight or moisture. When stored in the right conditions, dehydrated tuna salad can last for up to six months with no spoilage.

Creative ways to use dehydrated tuna salad

1. Rehydrate it by soaking in water or broth to use in tuna salad sandwiches or salads as a protein-packed addition.
2. Add it to your pasta dishes for an extra zing.
3. Pulverize it in a food processor and store it as seasoning for your everyday dishes.
4. Take the dehydrated tuna salad with you as an energy-boosting snack when traveling or hiking. You can also mix it with nuts, seeds, and other dried fruits for a unique trail mix.

General Fruit Dehydrating Tips

- **Peaches** – When dehydrating peaches, you do not have to peel them, but the pits must be removed. Peach pits are poisonous. Cube or slice the peaches into small portions. If you prefer to dehydrate peaches in halves, you may have to use only one tray at a time and double the drying time. To help enhance crispness and to thwart browning, spray the peaches with up to one teaspoon of lemon juice per tray. Dehydrate the peaches for 5 to 15 hours, depending upon the number of trays used, at the 130 degree setting.
- **Rhubarb** - Steam the rhubarb to make it more tender before dehydrating. Cut the stalks of the plant into about 1-inch cubes and place them on the trays inside the machine. Dehydrate for 5 to 15 hours depending upon amount of rhubarb being dried, at 130 degrees.
- **Cherries** - After removing both the stems and the pits from the cherries, cut them in half and place them on either the fruit leather or mesh inserts already placed on the dehydrator trays. Dry the cherries at 130 degrees for about 18 to 20 hours.
- **Grapes** - To make raisins, cut the grapes in half and place them onto a mesh tray liner before drying them at 135 for up to 10 hours.
- **Pears** - Slice the fruit into thin chunks and use a mesh tray liner to dehydrate them at 130 degrees. For a full five trays of fruit expect the drying time to be about six hours.
- **Plums** - To make prunes, the plums must be quartered before being dehydrated at 130 for 10 to 30 hours.
- **Melons** - The skin and seed must be removed from melons before dehydrating at 130 degrees for 10 to 15 hours. Cube the melons and space them out to allow for adequate air flow on a mesh tray liner. Melons can remain a bit pliable even when completely dried, but going an extra hour in the machine should make them crisp and perhaps prolong their shelf life.
- **Berries, except for Strawberries** - Rinse the berries and pluck off the stems. Place the berries in a pot of boiling water until their skin is cracked - while this step is not absolutely necessary it is highly recommended and vastly speeds up the drying process. Put a solid or mesh tray liner in the dehydrator and space out the berries to allow adequate air flow in between them. Dry the berries at 130 degrees for a minimum of 10 hours. Large batches of berries can take up to 20 hours to dry. The berries will also boast a leather-like texture and can remain slightly tacky to the touch even when completely dehydrated.

General Vegetables Dehydrating Tips

Mushrooms - They must be dried at an 80 degree temperature for three to four hours during the initial drying stage. Then, place the mushrooms in the dehydrator at 125 degrees for five to 10 hours, approximately, or until they are thoroughly brittle.

Carrots, Broccoli, and Cauliflower - Shred or grate the vegetables into small bits and dehydrate for about eight hours. Broccoli and cauliflower can also be dried in larger chunks but will take up to 12 hours to complete the process. Always use a mesh tray liner when drying small cubes or shredded vegetables.

Beets - The beets must be peeled after being cooked and then cut into pieces no larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch before drying. The beets should be dried for up to eight hours and will have a leather-like texture when completely dehydrated.

Reconstituting Tips For Fruits And Vegetables

How To Reconstitute Dehydrated Fruits and Vegetables

Lightly spray or soak the dehydrated food into up to 1 tablespoon of slightly warm water per $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of dry material. Allow the mixture to sit for five minutes so the fruits or vegetables can soak up the moisture content and be ready to eat, cook, or bake within typical recipes.

Preserving Poultry and Meat By Dehydrating

It is possible to dehydrate any type of meat, but the process is really only recommended for lean meat. Lean meat has a fat content of 15 percent or less. Meat from cattle, particularly grass ed cattle, is usually between seven and 10 percent fat.

Fatty meat may become rancid if only a tiny amount of oxygen creeps into a storage bag or container. When the stored dehydrated meat is exposed to either heat or light evenly slightly, the chances of oxidation increase. Always vacuum seal meat if possible and store it in a cool dry place.

Fruit Leather Making Tips

Top 20 Fruits To Preserve For Making Fruit Leather



- Apples
- Bananas
- Cherries
- Strawberries
- Blackberries
- Grapes
- Watermelon
- Cantelope
- Pears
- Apricots
- Peaches
- Raspberries
- Lemon
- Kiwi
- Pumpkin
- Plums
- Pineapple
- Oranges
- Blueberries
- Rhubarb

- Remove the cores or large seeds from the fruit after washing it. Do not remove the skin.
- Cut the fruit into tiny cubes or use a food processor on the pulse or dice setting to cut up the fruit.
- Mix in sweeteners (optional) at a 1 to 2 ratio with the amount of fruit used.

- Recommended sweeteners include: nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, maple syrup, almond extract, or vanilla extract. A sprinkling of raisins, nuts that have been chopped finely, coconut shavings, sesame seeds, or a finely chopped bit of granola can also enhance both the taste and nutritional content of the fruit leather.
- Mix all of the ingredients together thoroughly and pour onto solid plastic tray liners that have been placed in the dehydrator.
- Dry at 135 degrees or approximately four to 10 hours, depending upon the amount of fruit leather being made and the thickness of the mixture.
- If the fruit leather is difficult to remove from the trays, place the trays into the refrigerator or freezer for 30 minutes to help it release from the tray and peel away more easily.
- The fruit leather can be rolled into stripes of parchment paper for easy packing. Store the fruit leather in a vacuum sealed container or Mason jar. It should last up to two weeks to one month when dried and stored properly.

Dehydrating Wild Plants and Flowers

Drying flowers to preserve them in a dehydrator allows you to process a large batch all at once - even more flowers than can be crammed into a conventional oven. But, even though dehydrating flowers is a lot quicker than hang drying flowers, the process will still take many hours longer than preserving them in an oven.

Dehydrating flowers takes about eight to 10 hours. It is not uncommon to keep a batch of freshly picked wildflowers in the dehydrator overnight, especially when drying large or dense varieties.

It is best to wait until the flowers have fully bloomed to dehydrate them, especially if they will be used for crafting instead of their wild edible or natural healing properties. The flower heads will lay far more flat and dry more evenly once the petals are outstretched fully.

Dehydrating Tips

If you are dehydrating flowers for arts and crafts and want to preserve a flower bud or partially unopened flower for aesthetic reasons, that is entirely doable in a typical residential dehydrator.



Expect flower buds to take about 12 hours to completely dry out, perhaps a bit longer or shorter depending upon how large and thick the bud actually is when placed inside the machine.

But, for even drying it is best to only do a like batches of flowers, either by density or dimension. Always place the flowers (or petals, leaves and stems) onto the dehydrator trays with enough space between them to facilitate adequate air flow.

Always place the most dense flowers on the top of the tray (closest to the machine fan) because they will take the longest to dry.

I always rotate my trays a couple of times when dehydrating anything so the contents of each tray gets a turn on the top portion of the machine. Reverse the steps in this tip if the fan is in the bottom portion of your dehydrating machine.

If you are dehydrating small flower heads or primarily petals and leaves, use the mesh inserts designed to fit your machine to place them upon. Because flowers (and anything else you dehydrate) will shrink in dimension as the moisture is pulled from them, items which start small to begin with, can fall through the uncovered trays onto the catchment basin at the bottom of the dehydrator.

How To Dehydrate Flowers

1. Cut the flower heads from the stems as evenly as possible so they will lay flat on the dehydrator trays or mesh inserts. If preserving just the petals, snip or carefully pluck them from the flower head with scissors - leaves can be removed in the same manner. Stems or roots can be preserved whole (increasing drying time) or sliced down the middle or chunked. It will take stems and roots about 12 hours to dry.
2. Place the mesh inserts into the tray, if using them.
3. Spread the flower parts onto the trays leaving space in between them - do not layer. Flower petals are thin and do not require as much spacing as whole flower heads.
4. Place the lid onto your dehydrator machine.
5. Choose the lowest heat setting or the one designated for herbs, and start the machine.
6. Rotate the trays about every two hours - optional but highly recommended.

Store the dehydrated flowers in airtight Mason jars, freezer bags, or vacuum sealed bags. When stored in this type of a container and in a cool dry place, the flowers dried in the dehydrator should remain viable for use for at least 12 months - but in my personal experience, for about 5 years. I recommend storing in small containers because the more the dried flowers are exposed to air and moisture, the less likely they are to maintain their preserved state and be viable for use - especially in wild flower recipes and home remedies.

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