



MUST HAVE

CANNING EQUIPMENT

For the Brand New Beginner



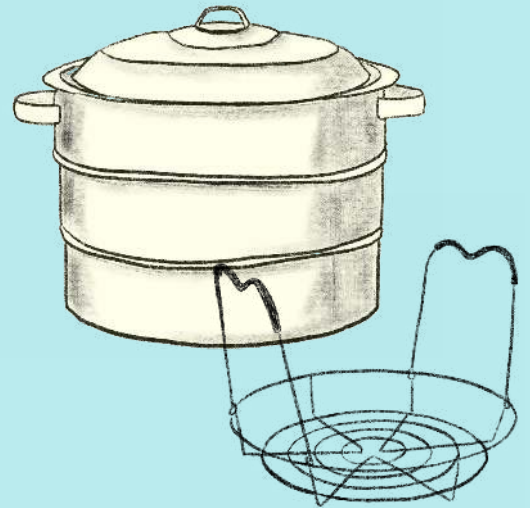
1 WATER BATH CANNER

This is a big pot with a lid and a metal rack in the bottom (to keep the jars from banging together while they boil). It's used to 'water bath' (boil for a set time) your freshly canned jars of food in order to heat them to a proper temperature that will kill bacteria and also seal the jars for long term storage.

You can generally find them for new for under \$30. But check garage sales and thrift stores. I've found two that way for \$5 each!

If you have a big stock pot (at least 3 inches higher than the height of the jars you'll be using), you can use that instead. Replace the wire rack with a dishcloth on the inside bottom of the pot to keep the jars from knocking together as they boil.

A water bath canner is NOT the same thing as a pressure canner. There is no pressure involved in a water bath canner, it simply boils your filled jars.



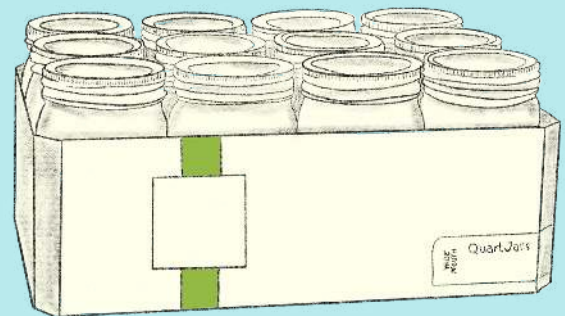
2 CANNING JARS, LIDS & RINGS

Traditional canning requires canning jars, one-time-use jar lids (with a rubber seal) and jar rings that screw the lid to the jar.

While you can buy each part separately, if you're just starting, buy cases of jars that come with the lids and rings. The jars and rings are reusable for years, so you'll just have to replace the lids with each use (which are super inexpensive).

Canning jars come in a variety of sizes. Pick the size that works with what you want to can (like smaller half pint jars for jam and larger quart jars for pickles, etc.). Jars also come in 'regular' or 'wide-mouth' varieties. This refers to the size of the jar opening. Generally, pick whichever you like best. I use both kinds equally.

Make sure to use jars that are for made canning (they will be labeled as such). Not all jars are suitable.

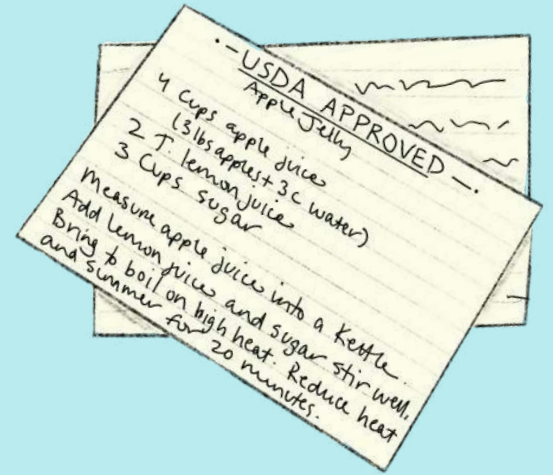


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CERTIFIED SAFE CANNING RECIPES

Here is where you DON'T want to use grandma's old canning recipe if it's not a certified safe recipe.

If you're not sure what's safe, the recipes that come in boxes of pectin, any book or recipe put out by Ball or Jayden and National Center for Home Food Preparation website are good places to start.



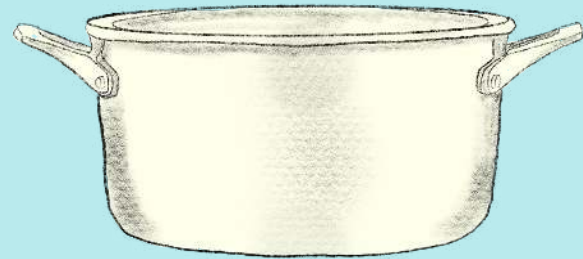
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LARGE NON-REACTIVE SAUCEPAN

Many recipes require you to use non-reactive cookware to prepare your food for canning. Non-reactive surfaces include stainless steel, enameled cookware and glass.

Along with a non-reactive pan, it's good to use non-reactive stirring utensils (a wooden or stainless steel spoon, for example) and stainless or glass bowls to mix your ingredients together in.

Reactive cookware include things like cast iron, aluminum and copper. Reactive cookware can leave metals in your food making them unsafe to use for canning, especially with acid based foods.



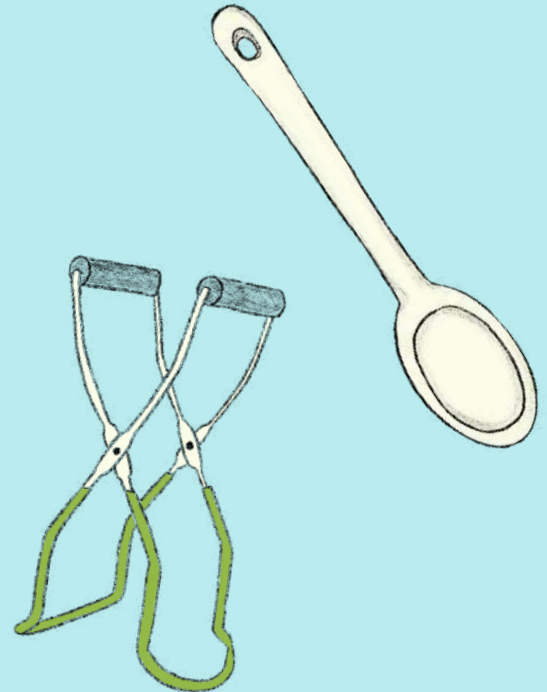
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CANNING JAR LIFTER TONGS

You can pick up jar lifter tongs for less than \$10.

These tongs will allow you to securely pull hot jars out of the canning bath with ease and without getting burned or dropping jars filled with hot food. The rubber around the bottom gives a nice, secure hold to the wet jars.

PS: Regular kitchen tongs don't work (I've tried).



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CANNING FUNNEL

A canning funnel is a funnel with a wide base that fits perfectly on the top of a canning jar. This enables you to fill jars without the mess of spilling food over the sides.

While it's totally possible to get by without this tool (I use one about half the time), you can buy one for less than \$5 so it's a good item to have around if you need it.

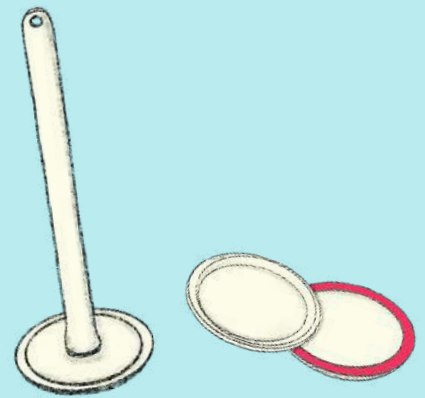


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MAGNETIC LID LIFTER

This \$3 tool makes pulling hot jar lids out of water a snap. This is one of my favorite tools because we never had one when I was growing up and it makes grabbing jar lids so easy!

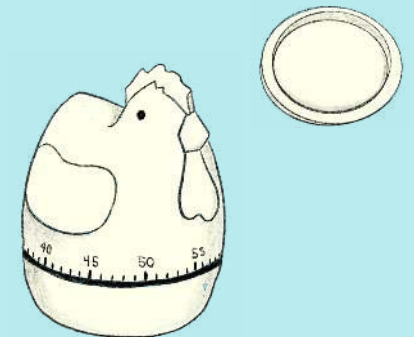
(We used a fork when I was a kid--which is doable, but more awkward and for \$3 why fight with a fork?)



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KITCHEN TIMER

You can use a stand-alone kitchen timer, or just the one on your stove or even your phone. There will be elements in the canning process that will need to be timed exactly to the minute.

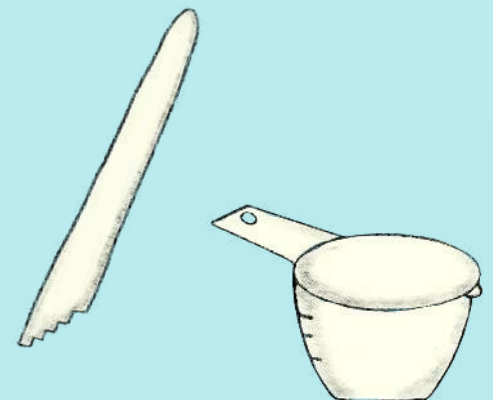


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BUBBLE REMOVER TOOL

This is two tools in one and it's only \$3. It's used to remove trapped bubbles in the food you've just added to the jars. One end of this tool also serves as a easy way to measure how much head space (the space between the food in your jar and the top of the jar) there is, which is important.

However, you can use a plain butter knife to release bubbles and keep a ruler handy to measure head space and skip this tool if you want.



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MISC. KITCHEN SUPPLIES AS NEEDED

You'll also need a variety of other item such as a wooden spoon, non-reactive mixing bowls, dish towels and dish cloths, etc.

And depending on your recipe, you might also need measuring cups and spoons, a kitchen scale, etc. Most of these items you probably already have.



For more information on canning, visit: www.CityGirlFarming.com