

# PickYourOwn.org

Where you can find a pick-your-own farm near you!

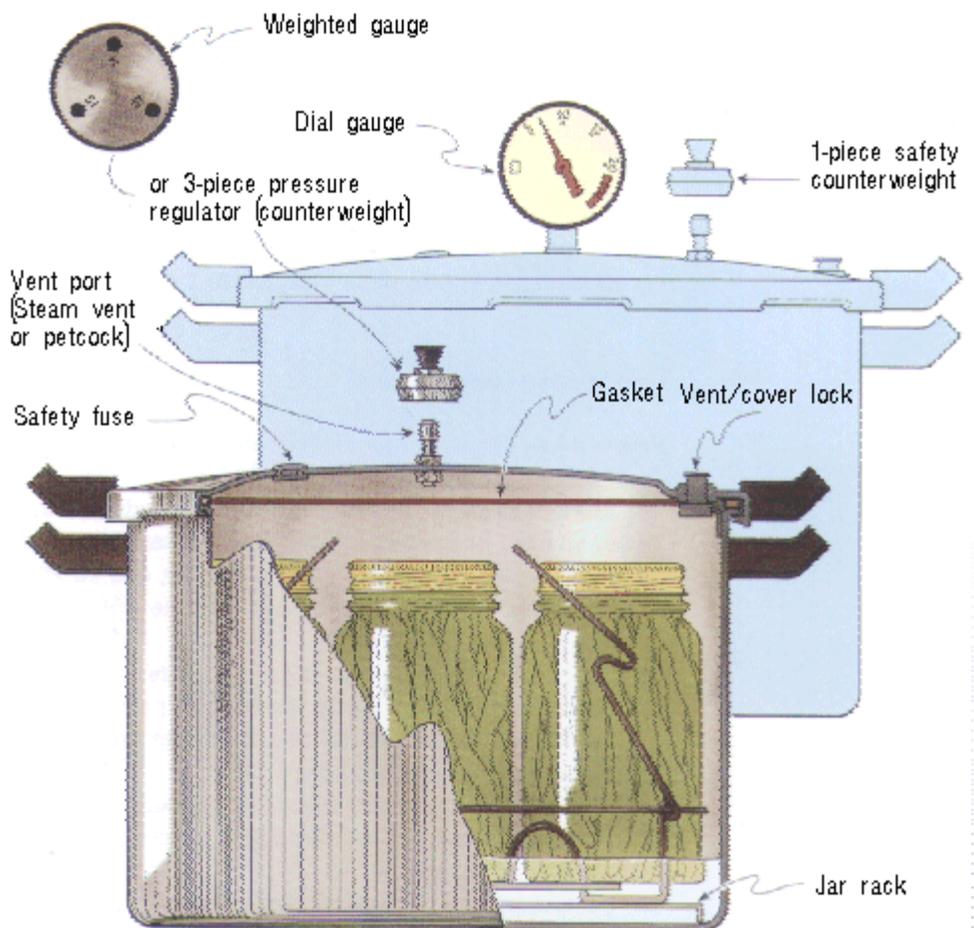
Click on the printer icon that looks like this:  Print (at the top left, to the right of "save a copy") to print!  
See [www.pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm](http://www.pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm) for many other canning directions and recipes

## How to Make Home and Can Tomato Juice at Home with a Pressure Canner- Easily!

This version uses a pressure canner, [see this page for the boiling water bath version](#).

Pressure canners costs \$100 to \$200 (see this page for pressure canners models, makes and prices), they last a lifetime, and your children and grandchildren may be using it. You can also find free information from the USDA in this PDF file (it will take a while to load!) about [selecting and using canners](#) here!

So, here's how to can roasted tomatoes. The directions are complete with instructions in easy steps and illustrated. In the winter when you open a jar, the roasted tomatoes will taste **MUCH** better than any store-bought canned roasted tomatoes.



Prepared this way, the jars have a shelf life of about 12 months, and aside from storing in a cool, dark place, require no special attention.

## Ingredients

- **Tomatoes** - You can use almost any quantity, to make 1 jar or more. An average of 21 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 13 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 53 pounds and yields 15 to 21 quarts-an average of 3 pounds per quart.
- **Lemon juice** - bottled lemon juice (2 tablespoons per quart jar)

## Equipment

- 1 Pressure Canner (a large pressure pot with a lifting rack to sanitize the jars after filling (about \$75 to \$200 at mall kitchen stores and "big box" stores, but it is cheaper online; [see this page for more information](#)). For low acid foods (most vegetables, you can't use an open water bath canner, it has to be a pressure canner to get the high temperatures to kill the bacteria. If you plan on canning every year, they're worth the investment.
- Jar grabber (to pick up the hot jars)
- Jar funnel (\$2 at mall kitchen stores and local "big box" stores, but it's usually cheaper online from our affiliates)
- At least 1 large pot
- Large spoons and ladles
- Ball jars (Publix, Kroger, other grocery stores and some "big box" stores carry them - about \$8 per dozen quart jars including the lids and rings)

## Directions - Step by Step

## Step 1 - Selecting the tomatoes

It's fun to go pick your own and you can obviously get better quality tomatoes!

Wash, remove stems, and trim off bruised or discolored portions of the tomatoes. Generally, you'll need about 2 quarts of raw tomatoes to make 1 quart of chopped, peeled tomatoes, and each quart of the prepared tomatoes makes about 1 pint of soup. A bushel of tomatoes weighs 53 pounds.



At right is a picture of tomatoes from my garden - they are so much better than anything from the grocery store. And if you don't have enough, a pick-you-own farm is the place to go! At right are 4 common varieties that will work:

Top left: Beefsteak	Top right: Lemon Boy, yellow
Bottom left: Roma, paste-type	Bottom right: Better Boy

The picture at right shows the best variety of tomato to use: Roma; also called paste tomatoes. They have fewer sides, thicker, meatier walls, and less water. And that means thicker sauce in less cooking time!

Also, you don't want mushy, bruised or rotten tomatoes!



**Caution:** Do not can tomatoes from dead or frost-killed vines. Green tomatoes are more acidic than ripened fruit and can be canned safely, also.

## **Step 2 - Wash the tomatoes and cut in half**

Just wash them in cold water, and cut them in half, through the stem and bottom.

## **Step 3 - Prepare the jars, oven and pressure canner**

**Get the oven heating to 450  
F (220 C)  
Wash the jars and lids**



This is a good time to get the jars ready! The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sanitize" cycle. Otherwise put the jars in boiling water for 10 minutes. I just put the lids in a small pot of almost boiling water for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" (available from target, other big box stores, and often grocery stores; and available online - see this page) to pull them out.

## **Get a large pot of water boiling**

We will use this water to pour over the beans and fill each jar with liquid, after we've packed them full of beans. I use the largest pot I have, so that there is plenty of clean, boiling water ready when I need it.

## Get the pressure canner heating up

Rinse out your pressure canner, put the rack plate in the bottom, and fill it to a depth of 4 inches with hot tap water. (of course, follow the instruction that came with the canner, if they are different). Put it on the stove over low heat, with the lid OFF of it, just to get it heating up for later on.



### **Step 4 - Put the tomatoes in the roasting pan**

Arrange the tomato halves face down in a roasting pan. You ought to be able to fit about 5 pounds in a large roasting pan. If you like, you may sprinkle each pan with 1 tablespoon of dried, crushed herbs (typically rosemary, thyme and/or basil)

### **Step 5 - Roast the tomatoes**

Roast the tomatoes at 450°F for about half an hour. Alternatively, you may cook them run them under the broiler for 3 to 5 minutes. Either way, cook them until they're wrinkled with only a few black spots.

### **Step 6 - Add lemon juice to each jar**

Add two tablespoons of bottled lemon juice or 1/2 teaspoon of citric acid to each empty quart jar. For pints, use one tablespoon bottled lemon juice or 1/4 teaspoon citric acid. Acid can be added directly to the jars before filling with product. You can add 2 tablespoons of sugar to each quart jar (1 to each pint) to offset acid taste, if desired. Four tablespoons of a 5 percent acidity vinegar per quart may be used instead of lemon juice or citric acid. However, vinegar may cause undesirable flavor changes.. Add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart to the jars, if desired (I don't add any salt).

### **Step 7 - Fill the jars with the tomatoes**

Fill jars with the roasted tomatoes, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Press the tomatoes in the jars until spaces between them fill with juice. Leave 1/2-inch headspace.

### **Step 8 - Put the lids and rings on**

Put the lids on each jar and seal them by putting a ring on and screwing it down snugly (but not with all your might, just "snug").

### **Step 9 - Put the jars in the canner and the lid on the canner (but still vented)**

Using the jar tongs, put the jars on the rack in the canner. By now the water level has probably boiled down to 3 inches. If it is lower than that, add more hot tap water to the canner. When all the jars that the canner will hold are in, put on the lid and twist it into place, but leave the weight off (or valve open, if you have that type of pressure canner).

### **Step 10 - Let the canner vent steam for 10 minutes**

Put the heat on high and let the steam escape through the vent for 10 minutes to purge the airspace inside the canner.



**Step 11 - Put the weight on and let the pressure build**

After 10 minutes of venting, put the weight on and close any openings to allow the pressure to build to 11 pounds.



**Step 12 - Process for 25 minutes**

Once the gauge hits 10 or 11 pounds, start your timer going - for 25 minutes. Adjust the heat, as needed, to maintain 10/11 pounds of pressure. If your canner uses a different pressure, see the tables below.

Note: the table will help you determine the right processing time and pressure, if you have a different type of canner, or are above sea level.

It is important to learn how to operate your pressure canner by reading the owner's manual that came with your particular canner. If you can not find your owner's manual, you can obtain find one online: Here is where to find some common manufacturer's manuals:

- [Presto canner manuals](#)

or by contacting the company that made your canner. Give the model number to the manufacturer, and they will send you the right manual. More [notes on pressure canners from Colorado State University](#).

**Table 1. Recommended Process Time for Whole or Halved Tomatoes (packed raw without added liquid) in a Weighted-Gauge Pressure Canner**

			Canner Gauge Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of	
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0 - 1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Raw	Pints or Quarts	40 min	5 lb	10 lb
		25	10	15
		15	15	Not Recommended

**Table 2. Recommended Process Time for Whole or Halved Tomatoes (packed raw without added liquid) in a Dial-Gauge Pressure Canner**

			Canner Gauge Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of			
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0 - 2,000 ft	2,001 - 4,000 ft	4,001 - 6,000 ft	6,001 - 8,000 ft
Raw	Pints or Quarts	40 min	6 lb	7 lb	8 lb	9 lb
		25	11	12	13	14



### **Step 13 - Turn off the heat and let it cool down**

After 25 minutes at 11 pounds, turn off the heat and let the canner cool down. After the pressure drops to zero (usually, you can tell but the "click" sound of the safety release vents opening, as well as but the gauge. Wait 3 more minutes, then open the vent or remove the weight and allow the steam to escape.



### **Step 14 - Remove the jars**

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool on a wooden cutting board or a towel, without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight), here they won't be bumped. You can then remove the rings if you like. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok. You're done!