

dill pickle chips

RECIPE COURTESY OF ELIZABETH POETT

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ½ pounds small pickling cucumbers or cocktail cucumbers, sliced into ¼-inch rounds
- 2 tablespoons pickling salt (see Cook's Note)
- 2 cups distilled white vinegar (5 percent acidity)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 garlic clove, sliced thinly (2 slivers per jar)
- 2 teaspoons whole mustard seeds (½ teaspoon per jar)
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns (¼ teaspoon per jar)
- 8 whole cloves (2 cloves per jar)
- 1 bunch fresh dill (4 to 6 sprigs per jar)

ACTIVE TIME:

30 minutes

TOTAL TIME:

26 hours (includes resting time)

EASE OF PREPARATION:

Intermediate

YIELD:

Four 8-ounce jars

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

Four 8-ounce canning jars with bands and new lids, canning pot and rack, jar lifter, canning funnel, lid wand

Every time I pull a jar of these pickles off the shelf, I am so happy I took the time to make them. They are a wonderful addition to many kinds of sandwiches. I often put them on the table at a barbecue so that people can snack on them and add a little something salty to their plates. This is a fun and simple project to do on your own or with your family.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toss the cucumber slices in a bowl with 1 tablespoon of the pickling salt. Cover with a clean kitchen cloth and let sit for no more than 1 hour.
2. Prepare the jars: Wash four 8-ounce canning jars with bands and new lids in hot, soapy water, then rinse well. Place the rack in the canning pot and begin filling the pot with warm tap water; while doing so, fill each of the jars with water and place them in the pot. Add enough water to the pot so the jars are covered by 2 inches. Add the bands and lids to help ensure a good seal. Cover the pot and bring the water to a boil, then turn off the heat. Keep the pot covered until ready to fill the jars.
3. Prepare the brine: Measure 2 cups water, the vinegar, sugar, and remaining 1 tablespoon pickling salt into a large, heavy duty cooking pot. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring until the salt and sugar dissolve.
4. Pour the liquid out of the bowl of cucumber slices and rinse them. Leave to drain in a colander.
5. Fill the jars: It is important to handle the jars carefully and to work with one at a time, keeping the pot covered. Both the jar and the product should be hot. Lay a clean kitchen cloth down on the flat surface where you will be packing the jars. Use a jar lifter to pull out the first jar and pour out the water into the pot. Insert a canning funnel into the jar mouth. Add 2 slivers of garlic to the jar, followed by 1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds, 1/4 teaspoon peppercorns, and 2 whole cloves. Add 4 to 6 sprigs of fresh dill, then pack in the cucumber slices, leaving 1/4 inch of headspace. Ladle the hot brine into the jar, leaving 1/4 inch of headspace. Run a wooden skewer around the inside of the jar to remove air bubbles. Wipe the rim of the jar with a clean, wet cloth to ensure that nothing will interfere with the seal. Using a lid wand, lift a hot lid and band out of the water bath. Place the lid on the jar. Screw the band over the lid and tighten it until you meet with some resistance. Do not overtighten.
6. Leaving the first filled jar on the cloth, pull out the next jar and repeat the packing process. Pack and fill each jar and put on the lid and band before pulling out the next jar. When all of your jars are packed, use the jar lifter to lower the full, closed jars back onto the rack inside the canning pot.

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7. Process the jars: Cover the canning pot and bring the water to a boil, then set a timer and process the jars for 20 minutes. Turn off the heat. Carefully remove the pot lid, tilting it away from yourself to avoid the steam. Use the jar lifter to remove the jars to a cooling rack or a flat surface lined with a cloth, leaving a little space between the jars.

8. Let sit undisturbed for 24 hours. You'll know the lids are properly sealed by the popping noise they make; this may happen right away or much later. Also, the dimple on the top of the lid should be flat and the lid concave. Write the date on the jar lid and keep in a cool, dark place for up to 1 year. Any jars that are not sealed should be refrigerated and used within 1 month.

COOK'S NOTE: *You can use pickling salt or kosher salt for making pickles. Don't use iodized salt; it will make the brine cloudy, while kosher salt and pickling salt help keep the brine clear.*

DISCLAIMER: SAFETY NOTES

Properly handled sterilized equipment will keep canned foods in good condition for 1 year. Making sure hands, equipment, and surfaces in your canning area are clean is the first step in canning.

TIPS: *Jars should be made from glass and free of any chips or cracks. Preserving or canning jars are topped with glass, plastic, or metal lids that have a rubber-like seal. Two-piece metal lids are most common.*

TO PREPARE JARS BEFORE FILLING: *Wash jars with hot, soapy water, rinse them well, and arrange them open-side up, without touching, on a tray. To sterilize jars, boil them in a large saucepan, covered with water, for 10 minutes. Jars have to be sterilized only if the food to be preserved will be processed for less than 10 minutes in a boiling-water bath or pressure canner. To sterilize jars, boil them in a large saucepan, covered with water, for 10 minutes. Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and preparing lids and bands. Use tongs or jar lifters to remove hot, sterilized jars from the boiling water. Be sure the tongs are sterilized too: Dip the tong ends in boiling water for a few minutes before using them. All items used in the process of making jams, jellies, preserves, and pickles must be clean, including any towels and especially your hands. After the jars are prepared, you can preserve the food. It is important to follow any canning and processing instructions included in the recipe and refer to USDA guidelines about the sterilization of canned products. Find information on canning at the National Center for Home Food Preservation website: <http://nchfp.uga.edu>*