



Step-by-Step Freezing

Introduction

Freezing is a method for preserving fresh foods. During the freezing process, the extreme cold retards growth of microorganisms and slows down enzyme activity, preventing food spoilage and undesirable texture, flavor and color changes.

Freezing keeps the natural color, fresh flavor and nutritive qualities of most foods better than other methods such as fresh preserving (home canning) or dehydrating. Because the end result is more similar to fresh foods than those canned or dried, freezing is becoming a popular method of food preservation. Plus, it is simple to do and takes little time!

Low-acid foods include vegetables, soups, stews, stocks, meats, poultry and seafood. Recipes that combine high-acid foods, such as tomatoes, with low-acid foods, such as vegetables or meats, are considered low-acid foods.

You Will Need

- Freezing recipe such as one found in the Ball Blue Book® Guide to Preserving or www.freshpreserving.com
- Common kitchen utensils and meal preparation equipment
- Freezer containers or packaging, such as freezer safe glass or plastic jars, plastic freezer bags, vacuum packages, freezer foil or freezer paper
- Fresh produce and other quality ingredients



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■ Step 1

READ through recipe and instructions. Assemble equipment and ingredients. Follow guidelines for recipe preparation, type and size of packaging and freezing method.

■ Step 2

SELECT appropriate freezer containers or packaging for the type of food being frozen. Use rigid containers for foods which are liquid or semi-liquid at room temperature and flexible wrap for foods which are solid at room temperature. Wash freezer containers in hot soapy water. Rinse well and dry.

■ Step 3

PREPARE fresh produce and other quality ingredients according to the freezing recipe instructions. Vegetables require blanching, a critical step to cleanse off surface dirt, brighten the color, help retain vitamins and reduce the action of enzymes which can destroy the fresh flavor.

■ Step 4

PACK prepared food in appropriate freezer containers or wrap with freezer packaging according to the recipe instructions. For rigid containers, leave 1/2 inch headspace to allow for expansion of liquid during freezing.

■ Step 5

LABEL containers or packaging with the date and name of the product.

■ Step 6

FREEZE in a single layer near the coldest spot in the freezer. After food is frozen solid, the containers can be stacked.

■ Step 7

STORE at 0°F in the freezer for the recommended length of time.