



Using a Steam Canner

By Diane Whitten

In 2015 the University of Wisconsin published research on canning using a steam canner, so the canning processes can be done using less water. The processing times are the same as they are for boiling water canning. A steam canner is limited by the amount of water in the canner base, so it cannot be used when processing times are 45 minutes or longer because the water will boil dry.

Cautions:

Use only for high acid foods with a pH of 4.6 or lower.

Follow USDA canning timetables for processing in a boiling water canner.

Adjust time steam evacuation and canning time for altitude.

Do not use if process time is 45 minutes or greater.

Boiling water will fill canner lid with steam, evacuating all air after approximately 10 minutes of boiling. Begin canning timing after all air has been evacuated.

Canning Directions

1. Place rack in canner base. Fill with water to bottom of rack.
2. Place lid on canner base, noting where steam vents are located. This will prevent burns when reaching for items on other stove burners.
3. Turn on stove burner when filling canning jars with food.
4. Carefully remove canner lid and place filled jars on rack. Steam may be present already.
5. Replace lid on canner. Watch for clear steam to come out of vent hole(s). Set timer to vent steam for 10 minutes. Some canner models have a temperature indicator on the lid that when canner cavity is filled with steam. A thermometer placed in vent hole should read 210 to 212° F. at 0 to 1000 feet elevation.
6. After steam evacuation, begin timing the canning process. Time depends on USDA directions for specific food in various size jars. Timetables for boiling water canning may be used for steam canning.
7. At end of canning time, turn off stove burner and wait 5 minutes before removing lid.
8. Remove jars and place jars 1 inch apart on a protected surface (wood or towel) to prevent jar breakage.