

Directions for Making Canned Greens

Ingredients and Equipment

- Greens (see step 1 for quantities)
- 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)
- Salt (optional - I don't use any)
- 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.

Recipe and Directions

Step 1 - Selecting the greens

The most important step! You need greens that are FRESH and crisp. Limp, old greens will make nasty tasting canned greens. Guests will probably throw them at you.. Select filled but tender, firm, crisp greens. Discard any wilted, discolored, diseased, or insect- damaged leaves. Leaves should be tender and attractive in color.

How many greens and where to get them

You can grow your own, pick your own, or buy them at the grocery store. An average of 28 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 18 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 18 pounds and yields 3 to 9 quarts - an average of 4 pounds per quart.



Step 2 - Prepare the jars and pressure canner

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 greens and fill each jar with liquid, after we've packed them full of greens. 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 3 -Wash the greens!

I'm sure you can figure out how to rinse the greens in plain cold or lukewarm water. Wash only small amounts of greens at one time. Drain water and continue rinsing until water is clear and free of grit.

Step 4 - Trim the ends and cut out tough pieces

Cut out tough stems and midribs.

Step 5 - Blanching

Place 1 pound of greens at a time in cheesecloth bag or blancher basket and steam 3 to 5 minutes or until well wilted. This is blanching. It stops the bacteria and enzymes from degrading the quality during storage.

Step 6 - Packing the greens in the canning jars

Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt to each quart jar, if desired. Fill jars loosely with greens and add fresh boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace. Pack the jars loosely and be sure to leave 1 inch of space at the TOP of the jar. That is called "headspace" and is needed for expansion during heading.

Step 7 - Pour fresh boiling water into each packed jar

Use a ladle or pyrex measuring cup to carefully fill each packed jar with water from pot of boiling water. Fill to within 1 inch of the top. The greens should be covered and there should still be 1 inch of airspace left in the top of each jar. Be careful not to burn yourself, (or anyone else - children should be kept back during this step!)

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 70 minutes

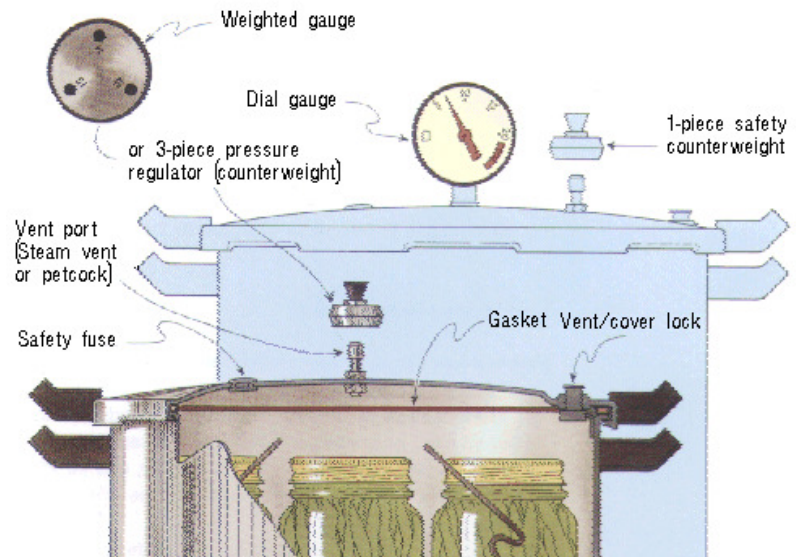
Once the gauge hits 10 pounds, start your timer going - for 70 minutes. Adjust the heat, as needed, to maintain 10 pounds of pressure.

Note: the chart at right 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 cannot 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. Click here for more [information about pressure canners and a variety of models you can order](#).



Recommended process time for Spinach and Other Greens in a dial-gauge pressure canner.						
			Canner 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
Hot	Pints	70 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb
	Quarts	90	11	12	13	14

Recommended process time for Spinach and Other Greens in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.				
			Canner Pressure (PSI) at Altitudes of	
Style of Pack	Jar Size	Process Time	0 - 1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Hot	Pints	70 min	10 lb	15 lb
	Quarts	90	10	15



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

When the processing time from the chart above is up, turn off the heat, and allow the pressure canner to cool and the pressure to drop to zero before opening the canner. Let the jars cool without being jostled. After the pressure drops to zero (usually, you can tell by the "click" sound of the safety release vents opening, as well as by the gauge. Let the pressure in the canner drop to zero by itself. This may take 45 minutes in a 16-quart canner filled with jars and almost an hour in a 22-quart canner. If the vent is opened before the pressure drops to zero OR if the cooling is rushed by running cold water over the canner, liquid will be lost from the jars. Too rapid cooling causes loss of liquid in the jars!

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, but if you leave them on, at least loosen them quite a bit, so they don't rust in place due to trapped moisture. 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!