

Recommendations and Resources

Backpacking Food Dehydration – 2024

Dehydration Basics:

Recommended Temperatures:

- 95°F Herbs
- 125°F Vegetables
- 125°F Beans and Lentils
- 135°F Fruit
- 145°F Grains
- 145°F Pre-cooked Meats
- 160°F Meat, Seafood
- 165°F Poultry

Techniques: Fruit:

- Pre-soak in lemon/lime juice (optional)
- Slice thinly or chop into small pieces
- Fruit is done dehydrating when it becomes leathery and is no longer sticky.
- Puree for fruit leathers

Techniques: Vegetables:

- Blanch or steam if tough or fibrous (potatoes, broccoli, carrots, corn, green beans)
- Soft veggies do not need to be pre-cooked (spinach, mushrooms, celery, zucchini)
- Frozen vegetables: pre-chopped/ready to go!
- Slice thinly or chop into small pieces
- Vegetables are done dehydrating when they become hard or crisp.

Techniques: Meat:

- Ground beef: Leanest possible (96%)
 - Avoid “gravel”: 1lb lean ground beef + ½ cup bread crumbs
 - Cook in pan without oil, breaking it up into crumbles
 - Use paper towels to remove excess oil
- Chicken: pressure cook lean chicken breast or use canned chicken
 - Remove excess fat after cooking with paper towel

Techniques: Pasta, Grains, Beans:

- Canned beans: dehydrate better, less splintering
- Cook rice, grains and pasta until al dente for dehydration
- Best use: hot soak meals

- Small/thin pasta shapes: do not need to be pre-cooked or dehydrated if you plan to simmer

Techniques: Ready To Go:

- Can prepare fully cooked meal and dehydrate as a full unit
 - Works best for meals that are homogenous in shape and use ingredients with similar dehydration time
 - Chilis, Stews, etc.
- Can prepare a sauce or base to coat additional ingredients
 - Curry sauce for chicken/rice
 - Homemade marinara sauce for noodles

Additional Dehydration Information:

- ThruEat → <https://www.thruetate.com/dried-basics>
- Fresh off the Grid → <https://www.freshoffthegrid.com/recipes/dehydrating/>

Recipe Blogs:

- ThruEat → <https://www.thruetate.com/backpacking-recipes>
- Dirty Gourmet → <https://dirtygourmet.com/category/recipes-by-activity/backpacking/>
 - Do yourself a favor and **DO NOT** try their Blueberry Cornmeal Pancake recipe... Trust me on this one.....
- Fresh off the Grid → https://www.freshoffthegrid.com/recipes/?fwp_activity=backpacking
- Andrew Skurka → <https://andrewskurka.com/tag/backpacking-meal-recipes/>
 - Do yourself a favor and **DO** try his Cheesy Potato breakfast recipe! Hiker heaven 😊

Groceries:

- <https://packitgourmet.com/>
 - I love to buy their dehydrated pork sausage and the concentrated broth packets (Savory Choice)

Supplies for Storage/Packaging:

- Mason Jars → can be purchased just about anywhere
- Kitchen scale → not necessary, but incredibly helpful!
- Boil-bags → <https://outdoorherbivore.com/boil-cook-bags/>
- Boil-bags → <https://packitgourmet.com/cook-in-bag-trade/>
- Mylar Bag Sealer → <https://wallabygoods.com/collections/all/products/8-inch-impulse-sealer-blue>

- Frugal option: you can also use a standard home clothing iron:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_fpxrN3Tgg&ab_channel=PREPCharley
- Mylar Bags → <https://packfreshusa.com/6-x-6-half-quart-standard-mylar-bags/>
 - Brown rice is high in oil content and has a short shelf life. Food high in moisture or oil content such as raisins, nuts, granola, chocolate chips, cookies, and crackers are NOT good candidates for long-term storage in a Mylar bags. However, they are just fine for short term storage (backpacking season)!
- Mylar Bags/MRE pouch → <https://wallabygoods.com/products/mylar-mre-pouches>
- Oxygen Absorbers → <https://packfreshusa.com/shop/oxygen-absorbers/>
 - Qty and “size” (measured in CC) per container volume

Absorption Required For Common Foods			
What matters is the air volume in the container after you have filled it. That depends, not just on the container size, but on the shape of the food particles and how tightly they are packed. ¹ When using a bag that can form around the food, you can get away with less absorption than with a rigid container like a mason jar.			
Container Size (Fill completely)	Pinto beans, red beans, rice (35% air)	Flour, flax meal, instant mixes, powders, coffee beans (50% air)	Pasta, cereal, instant potatoes, oatmeal, barley, dried corn (75% air)
1 Pint (16 oz.)	50cc	50cc	100cc
1 Quart (32 oz.) ²	100cc	100cc	150cc
1/2 Gallon (64 oz.)	150cc	200cc	300cc
1 Gallon	300cc	400cc	500cc
5 Gallon	1400cc	2000cc	2500cc

1. Food items like flour do not contain less air just because they have small particles.
 2. PackFreshUSA “Quart” bags are actually much larger than a quart, so we include 300cc OAPs in quart sets.

*Do not mix desiccant with oxygen absorber. Desiccants not recommended.