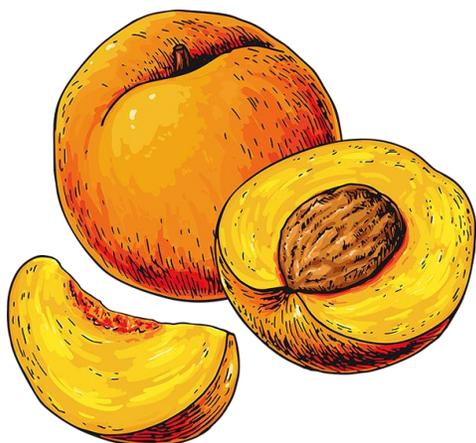




# Peaches



The hundreds of known peach varieties are classified as either clingstone or freestone. In freestone varieties, the fruit can be easily separated from the pit. In clingstones, the flesh adheres tightly to the pit. Redhaven, Elbertas, Hale and Red Globe are all yellow-fleshed freestone varieties common in Washington State. An estimated 12,000 pounds of peaches are grown per acre on the eastern side of Washington state, mainly in Yakima and the Okanogan Valley. The Okanogan peaches have a sweet/acid balance with just an edge of tartness. Okanogan fruit can be found at the Skagit farmers markets and fruit stands. Elbertas and Hales are favorites for canning.

## Nutrition

The peach is a good source of vitamin A as well as noticeable quantity of vitamin C. It is low in calories - about 46 in a medium-size peach, with no fat or cholesterol.

## Selection

Select peaches with moderately firm flesh, fuzzy appearance, and a fragrant smell. Ripe peaches will yield to gentle pressure. Avoid peaches with soft or colored spots, or green-tinged fruit. To clean peaches before processing, wash under running water and dry with a paper towel.

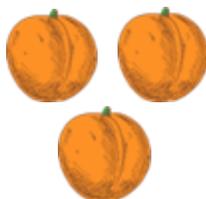
## Storage

Under-ripe peaches may be stored at room temp on the counter or similar to ripen within a few days. Ripe peaches may be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week, stem side down, in a single layer. Storing unripe fruit in the refrigerator is not recommended.

## Measurements



Size



Weight

Volume

## Freezing

- Select firm, ripe fruit with no green color in the skins. Wash, peel, and pit.
- Cut in halves, quarters or slices as desired.
- To prevent browning during preparation, place cut fruit immediately into a bowl of water containing anti-darkening agent. Drain.
- Pack in your choice of sugar syrup, sugar, or without sugar in moisture/vapor-proof freezer containers or freezer weight plastic bags.
- Leave 1/2 inch of headspace for expansion during freezing. Label, seal and freeze.
- Peaches can also be frozen first on a tray, then packed into moisture-vapor proof freezer containers or freezer weight plastic bags. Label, seal and freeze.



## Drying

**Preparation:** Peel. Cut in half and pit. Leave in halves or cut in quarters or slices. To prevent browning during preparation, place cut fruit into a bowl of water containing anti-darkening agent.

**Pretreatment:** None or anti-darkening agent

### Drying Procedure:

- Arrange in single layers on dehydrating trays, pit side up to retain juices. Dry at 140°F for 24-36 hours for halves. Dry until leathery and somewhat pliable. Cool thoroughly. Package dried peaches in moisture/vapor-proof containers. Label. Store in a cool, dark, dry place.



**Tip:** To peel a peach easily, dip the whole fruit into boiling water for 20-30 seconds and then plunge immediately into ice water. Skins will slip off readily.

## Boiling Water Canning

### Peach Pickles

Yield: About 6 pints

8 pounds peeled peaches (small to medium sized)

6¾ cups sugar

4 sticks cinnamon (2 inches long)

2 tablespoons whole cloves, crushed

1 tablespoon ginger

1 quart vinegar (5%)

Rinse and peel peaches with sharp knife, and drop into a solution of ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid and 2 quarts of water. Dissolve sugar in vinegar in saucepot and put on range to heat. Boil 5 minutes and skim. Add spices (tied loosely in cheesecloth).

Drain peaches. Drop drained peaches into boiling syrup and cook until they can be pierced with a fork,



but not soft. Remove from range and allow peaches to set in syrup overnight to plump. Bring to a boil and fill into hot jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Cover with syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed.

Wipe rim with clean, damp paper towel. Adjust two-piece lids and process in boiling water canner according to directions below.

Once processing is complete, turn off heat, remove canner lid and wait 5 minutes before removing jars. Let cool at room temperature, undisturbed, for 12 to 24 hours and check for seals. Wipe jars, remove rings, label, and store in a cool, dry place.

### Processing Directions:

Style of pack	Jar Size	1–1,000 ft	1,001 to 3,000 ft
Hot	Pints	20 minutes	25 minutes

# Boiling Water Canning



**Safety Note:** Do not use this process to can white-flesh peaches. The natural pH of some white peaches can exceed 4.6, making them a low-acid food for canning purposes. At this time there is no low-acid pressure process available for white-flesh peaches nor a researched acidification procedure for safe boiling water canning. Freezing is the recommended method of preserving white-flesh peaches.

## Canned Peaches

An average of 17½ pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 11 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints.

Dip fruit in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds until the skins loosen. Dip quickly in cold water and slip off skins. Cut in half, remove pits and slice if desired. To prevent darkening or discoloration, keep peeled fruit in an anti-darkening agent.

Prepare and boil a very light, light, or medium syrup or pack peaches in water, apple juice, or white grape juice.

**Hot pack** – In a large saucepan place drained fruit in syrup, water, or juice and bring to boil. Fill hot jars with hot fruit and cooking liquid, leaving ½-inch headspace. Place halves in layers, cut side down. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed.

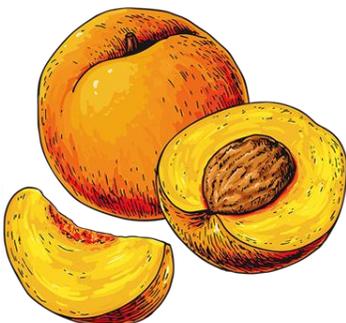
**Raw pack** – Fill hot jars with raw fruit, cut side down, and add hot water, juice, or syrup, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed.

Wipe rims of jars with a clean, damp paper towel. Adjust two-piece lids and process in boiling water canner according to directions below.

At the completion of processing, turn off heat and wait 5 minutes before removing jars. Let cool, undisturbed at room temperature, for 12 to 24 hours and check for seals. Wipe jars, remove rings, label, and store in a cool, dry place.

### **Processing Directions:**

Style of pack	Jar Size	1–1,000 ft	1,001 to 3,000 ft
Hot	Pints or Quarts	20 minutes pints, 25 minutes quarts	25 minutes pints, 30 minutes quarts
Raw	Pints or Quarts	25 minutes pints, 30 minutes quarts	30 minutes pints, 35 minutes quarts



**Tip: Syrups for use in Canning Fruits:**  
**Very light syrup**-1/2 cup sugar to 1 quart water  
**Light syrup**-1 cup sugar to 1 quart water  
**Medium Syrup** 1 ¾ cup sugar to 1 quart water

# Canning



## Jams/Jellies/Preserves:

Plums can be made into a variety of fruit spreads, either alone or in combination with other fruits. Recipes for jams, jellies and preserves can be found in commercial pectin packages. Options are available for full sugar, low sugar and freezer jam products. Recipes using pectin have been carefully formulated and should be followed exactly. Cooked fruit spreads must be processed in a boiling water canner for storage at room temperature.



## Peach Butter

2 quarts peach pulp (about 18 medium, fully ripe peaches)  
4 cups sugar

Yield: About 8 half-pint jars

To prepare pulp: Wash, scald, pit, peel, and chop peaches; cook until soft, adding only enough water to prevent sticking. Press through a sieve or food mill. Measure pulp.

To make butter: Add sugar; cooking until thick, about 30 minutes. As mixture thickens, stir frequently to prevent sticking. Meanwhile, sterilize canning jars.

Remove from heat and pour hot butter into hot, sterile jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids. Process in a Boiling Water Canner.

Wipe rim with clean, damp paper towel. Adjust two-piece lids and process in boiling water canner according to directions below.

Once processing is complete, turn off heat, remove canner lid and wait 5 minutes before removing jars. Let cool at room temperature, undisturbed, for 12 to 24 hours and check for seals. Wipe jars, remove rings, label, and store in a cool, dry place.

## **Processing Directions:**

Style of pack	Jar Size	1–1,000 ft	1,001 to 6,000 ft
Hot	Half Pints	5 minutes	10 minutes

Preserve Skagit Crop Sheets describe three food preservation techniques—freezing, drying, and boiling water canning—consistent with USDA Food Preservation and Food Safety recommendations. Pressure canning for low acid foods such as meats and vegetables is not included.

Additional resources and recipes, as well as information on Pressure Canning, can be found on the WSU Skagit Food Preservation Website <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/fam/food-preservation/> or the National Center for Home Food Preservation <https://nchfp.uga.edu/index.html>.

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