

How to Sterilise Jars for Preserving

*This free How To tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club –
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Preserving fruit and jams is a great way to use up excess fruit and to ensure that there is fruit for the table through the year. Before you begin your preserving you need to ensure that the jars and lids you are using are perfectly clean – sterile in fact – to avoid the risk of contaminating the food and causing food poisoning when it's eaten. These are two tried and true methods of sterilizing.

Microwave Method:

This method is suitable for jars to be used for preserving fruit that is to be cooked, or preserved, either in the microwave oven or in a water bath.

1. Clean jars and lids thoroughly in hot, soapy water. Remove any labels, glue etc with a scrub bud before sterilizing. Use a bottle brush to get inside, wash around all grooves and ridges and rinse in clean, hot water.
2. Half fill jars with cold water and cook on high in microwave oven until water boils, approximately two minutes per jar.
3. Remove from microwave and pour some of the boiling water into the jar lids.
4. Empty jars of boiling water before packing jars.



Oven Method:

This method is suitable for jars that are to be used for jams, jellies and marmalades.

1. Turn oven to 140 degrees Celsius.
2. Clean jars and lids thoroughly in hot, soapy water. Remove any labels, glue etc with a scrub bud before sterilizing. Use a bottle brush to get inside, wash around all grooves and ridges and rinse in clean, hot water.
3. Lay a clean tea towel, folded in half, over an oven sheet.
4. Place jars and lids upside down on tea towel.
5. Place in oven, with door closed, for at least 30 minutes.
6. Fill jars while hot to prevent breaking when hot jam is poured into the glass.

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