

Vacuum Packing Food

Bags and pouches · page 1 of 2

Vacuum packing pulls most of the air out of a bag, then seals it. Less oxygen slows freezer burn, odor transfer, and some spoilage. It is a storage method — not a way to make moist food shelf-stable.

Safety first

- Vacuum sealing does not kill bacteria. Low oxygen can favor *Clostridium botulinum* if moist food is left warm.
- Refrigerate or freeze perishable sealed food. Do not store it on the counter or in a pantry.
- Cool hot food fully before sealing. Label every bag with the food name and the date.
- Never seal raw garlic, herbs, or mushrooms in oil and leave them at room temperature.

How to seal a bag

- 1 Chill the food. Cold food seals cleaner and stays safer.
- 2 Portion for one meal. Pat surfaces dry.
- 3 Bag it. Keep food and moisture off the seal strip.
- 4 Vacuum, then seal. Stop if liquid creeps up the bag.
- 5 Soups and marinades: freeze solid first, then bag the block — unless you have a chamber sealer.
- 6 Label, date, and refrigerate or freeze right away.

What works well

- Raw meat, poultry, and fish for the freezer
- Hard cheese and cheese blocks
- Blanched vegetables for the freezer
- Cooked leftovers, used within a few days
- Dry goods: rice, beans, flour, nuts, coffee
- A short marinade in the fridge

Use care, or skip

- Soft bread and berries** — Air removal can crush them. Use a gentle setting, or skip.
- Liquids and juicy food** — External sealers pull liquid into the machine. Freeze first.
- Already risky food** — Do not seal food that is past its date, smells off, or was left out.

Typical storage after sealing a bag

Quality guide only — when in doubt, throw it out.

Food	Refrigerator	Freezer
Raw roasts and steaks	3–5 days	1–2 years
Ground meat, poultry, fish	1–2 days	6–12 months
Cooked leftovers	3–4 days	2–3 months
Hard cheese	2–4 weeks	6–8 months
Blanched vegetables	Not for long fridge storage	8–14 months

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Dry goods in pint, quart, and small-mouth jars · page 2 of 2

A jar sealer pulls air out of a mason jar and holds a flat lid down. Use it for food that is already fully dry. This is not canning. No heat is used, so it does not kill bacteria and it does not make moist food safe on a shelf.

Not oven dry canning

Heating jars of flour, beans, nuts, or oats in an oven is not a recommended method.

Jars may look sealed, but moisture pockets can remain. Do not dry-can in the oven.

Do not vacuum-seal soup, sauce, meat, or vegetables in jars for pantry storage.

Jars that fit

Pint

Everyday size. Regular or wide mouth.

Quart

Best for beans, rice, pasta, flour.

Small mouth

Regular mouth. Needs that sealer.

Wide mouth

Needs a wide-mouth sealer.

How to seal a jar

- 1 Use a clean, fully dry mason jar. A damp jar puts moisture back in.
- 2 Fill with dry food. Leave at least 1 inch of headspace.
- 3 Wipe the rim clean and dry. Set on a new flat lid. Leave the ring off.
- 4 Press the matching jar sealer onto the lid. The sealer must match the mouth, not the jar size.
- 5 Connect the hose and run the accessory cycle. Twist the sealer off. Do not pull straight up.
- 6 The lid center should not flex. Label, date, and store in a cool, dark, dry place.

What goes in a pantry jar

Yes, if fully dry

- White rice, pasta, oats, cornmeal
- Dry beans, lentils, and split peas
- White flour, sugar, and salt
- Fully dried herbs and spices
- Dehydrated food that snaps, not bends
- Coffee, tea, dried nuts and seeds

No for pantry storage

- Anything moist, oily, or not fully dry
- Home-dried food that still feels leathery
- Brown sugar — vacuum can turn it hard
- Leftovers, sauce, soup, or meat
- Food you would pressure-can or water-bath
- Nuts kept for years — fats still go rancid

After the jar is sealed

- A loose ring can protect the lid. Do not crank it down. The vacuum holds the lid, not the ring.
- Once opened, the vacuum is gone. Use the food in normal pantry time, or reseal if it is still fully dry.
- A popped lid, moisture, insects, or an off smell means do not use it.