

EASY DRY

5-Tray Electric Food Dehydrator

by



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Introduction to Food Dehydration

The Easy Dry Food Dehydrator uses heat to remove moisture from food to prevent the growth of microorganisms to increase shelf life and give a new sensation to food. Dehydrate food to supplement a dish, to eat it, or to store it and rehydrate it for later cooking.

The Easy Dry Food Dehydrator can be used to dehydrate fruits, vegetables, jerky, herbs, nuts, bread, flowers, and almost any food imaginable!

A Quick History

Food dehydration is a process that has been around since 12,000 B.C.E. Primitive civilizations dehydrated harvests in the sun during plentiful seasons for storing and traveling. The North American Indians preserved meat by drying slices. Dry fruit was part of Ancient Romans' everyday meal. Pioneers dried beef jerky and other foods when traveling across the country. Today astronauts enjoy dry fruit as desert, and so can we. Dehydrated food has been around for a long time, but only until today could we enjoy it at a low cost in the comfort of our own home thanks to Easy Dry Food Dehydrator.

Why Dehydrate?

Our ancestors dehydrated food for preservation and transportation, today we can do it for these same reasons or to create tasty and nutritious snacks.

Food dehydration is a great way to preserve food. Bacteria, yeasts, and molds in food need water to grow, by drying the food Easy Dry Food Dehydrator prevents them from growing. Dehydration extends the shelf life of food and promotes storing. Dehydrating food is also a great way to make it more portable and decrease storage space. Dried foods take from one-tenth to one-twentieth of the volume of frozen or canned foods. Easy Dry Food Dehydrator reduces the size of any food, making perfect snacks for camping, hiking, going to the beach, long car rides, or carrying with you.

Drying food with the Easy Dry Food Dehydrator can be a fun family activity. The process of drying food is safe and simple for kids to do, and a treat for them when it is finished.

Dehydrated food has a unique taste. Follow our recipes on page 5, to create tasty dishes, snacks, and desserts.

Pretreatment

While pretreatment is optional, we highly recommend it to improve the quality and shelf life of dehydrated foods.

Thoroughly wash and clean food items that may be dirty. Use only fresh and fully ripened fruits and vegetables as immature produce lacks flavor and color, and over mature produce can be tough or soft and mushy. Cut food into slices keeping in mind the thinner the slice, the faster the drying process. By pretreating fruit, oxidization is prevented which helps fruit keep its light color and flavor. There are various solutions that can be used for pretreatment.

- **Citric Acid**

Stir 1 teaspoon of citric acid into one quart of cold water.

- **Lemon Juice or Pineapple Juice**

Mix equal parts of lemon juice and cold water.

- **Sodium Metabisulfite U.S.P. (food grade)**

Stir 1 tablespoon of sodium metabisulfite into one quart of cold water. **Caution:** Pretreating with sodium metabisulfite is not recommended if consumer has sulfite sensitivity.

- **Ascorbic Acid (Vitamin C) Powder**

Mix 2 teaspoons in one quart of water.

- **Blanching (recommended for vegetables)**

You can blanch by steaming or immersing the vegetable in boiling water. Food should be hot but not cooked. Steaming can destroy natural flavor and texture. Not recommended for fruit.

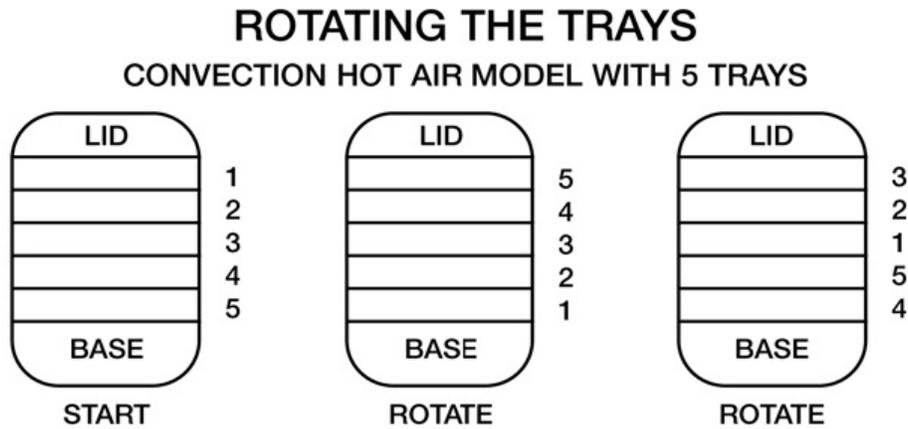
Dip the food into the solution and allow to soak for 5-10 minutes. Then drain well and place in Easy Dry Food Dehydrator.

Fruits with tough skins, such as grapes, prunes, cherries, figs, and berries can be pretreated to allow inside moisture to evaporate. Simply dip fruit in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds, then dip in cold water to crack the skin.

For a variety in flavor, fruits can be pretreated and dipped in spices, honey, cinnamon, or coconut.

How to Dry

- 1) Slice food into thin sheets. The thinner the slice, the quicker the drying process.
- 2) Pretreat- optional. Improves quality and prolongs shelf life.
- 3) Place in tray. Do not overlap food. **Do not put or leave empty trays in the dehydrator during the drying process. Doing so may cause damage to the trays.**
- 4) Rotate and turn trays about every six hours. Trays near the base dry faster than trays near the lid. For a more even dry, rotate and turn the trays as indicated below.



- 5) Test for dryness. Cut a small piece and check there is no moisture inside, if there is moisture continue drying. Dry fruits gain a leathery texture and dry vegetables become brittle.

Note: Foods should be dry enough to prevent microbial growth and subsequent spoilage. Dried vegetables should be hard and brittle. Dried fruits should be leathery and pliable. For long-term storage, home dried fruits will need to be drier than commercially dried fruits sold in grocery stores.

- 6) Enjoy, or read the following page to learn how to store properly.

How to Store

- Leave food to cool before storing. It is preferable to package in small amounts in glass jars or Ziploc bags. Seal containers tightly to prevent remoistening or entry of insects.
- Keep in a cool, dry place, or in the refrigerator or freezer. Discard any food that has mold or emits odd odors. Properly stored vegetables should last up to six months, and fruit should last six to twelve months.
- Fruits should be conditioned before storing. Conditioning is used to evenly distribute the residual moisture throughout all pieces and reduce the chance of spoilage.
- To condition place dried fruit in glass or plastic container and lightly cover. Store in a dry, warm, well-ventilated place for four to seven days. If moisture forms inside the container, remove fruit and dehydrate for longer time. Shake container once a day to separate the pieces.

Reconstituting - Rehydration of Food

It is possible to reconstitute dehydrated food to restore previous flavors and shapes. While fruits reconstitute to a puree, vegetables regain their former forms.

Fruits: To reconstitute fruits, place in bowl with water and boil. Let soak until liquid is absorbed and the mixture appears as a puree. As a rule of thumb, 1 cup of dried fruit reconstitutes to about 1 ^{1/2} cups.

Vegetables: To reconstitute vegetables, soak in cold, fresh water for 2 to 4 hours and cover. If reconstituted for cooking, preferably use the same water when cooking. As a rule of thumb, 1 cup of dried vegetables reconstitutes to about 2 cups.

**Be careful as over soaking will result in a loss of flavor.*

Recipes

Dehydrated Bananas

Peel the banana and cut into slices. Soak bananas in 1/2 cup lemon juice and 1 tablespoon of honey. Arrange slices on the dehydrator trays. Enjoy!

Dehydrated Apples

Peel apples and soak slices in 1/2 cup lemon juice and 1 tablespoon of honey. Sprinkle with a dash of cinnamon and arrange the slices on the dehydrator trays. Enjoy!

Fruit Leather

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of fresh fruit
- 1/2 cup of water
- 1-2 tbsp of sugar
- 2-3 tsp of lemon juice
- Cinnamon

Peel fruit if needed and chop to small pieces. Place in saucepan and add half a cup of water for every four cups of chopped fruit. Heat to a simmer and let cook on low heat for 10 to 15 minutes. Stir and add 2-3 teaspoons of lemon juice, a pinch of cinnamon, and 1-2 tablespoons of sugar, or until desired level of sweetness. Continue to simmer until everything is dissolved and a thick puree has formed. Pour out the mixture into a lined baking sheet or Teflex sheet of at least 1/8" thick. Dehydrate for 1-2 days. Peel and roll in plastic wrap or special plastic leather sheets. Enjoy!

Yum Cereal Bars

SERVINGS: 8

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup margarine
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 bag (10 oz.) of marshmallows
- 6 cups cereal
- 7 oz. dried mixed fruit pieces

Melt cinnamon, marshmallows, and margarine over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until marshmallows are completely melted. Add cereal and fruit and stir. When well mixed, spread cereal mixture into prepared pan. Let cool for 30 minutes and cut into desired bar sizes. Enjoy!

Delicious Tarts- Dried Apricot and Prune

SERVINGS: 10 tarts

Ingredients:

- 10 unbaked tart shells
- 1 cup dried apricots
- 1 cup dried prunes
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 3/4 cup prune liquid
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

Place prunes in saucepan with 1 cup of water and boil for 15 minutes. Take prunes out and keep the water. Remove pits from prunes, cut them in half and place them with cut in half apricots . Add salt, cinnamon, and 1/4 cup of the prune water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cook until mixture thickens. Pour mixture evenly into 10 tart shells. Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes or until golden brown. Enjoy!

Dry-Fruit Oatmeal Cookies

SERVINGS: 30 cookies

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda dissolved in 1 tablespoon warm water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 ^{1/2} cups rolled oats
- 1/2 cup dried sour cherries
- 1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
- 1/2 cup chopped pitted prunes

In large bowl cream the butter and add egg, brown sugar, flour, salt, baking soda mixture, and vanilla. Stir in oats, cherries, apricots, and prunes. Place dough in various mounds onto greased baking sheets and spread each mound into desired cookie size. Bake in preheated 375°F. oven 8 to 10 minutes. When golden, take out and let cool. Enjoy!

Jerky

SERVINGS: One pound

Ingredients:

- 4 pounds of raw meat
- Desired seasoning (Soy Sauce, Teriyaki, Worcestershire, etc.)

Trim all noticeable fat since it causes jerky to spoil faster. Slice meat into very thin strips from 1/8" to 1/4" thick against the grain. It is easier to slice the meat is frozen for around 30 minutes. Marinate in desired sauce for at least one hour to allow meat to absorb the flavor. Drain meat and dehydrate for 1-2 days depending on thickness of slice. Take out when jerky gains a burgundy color but is still flexible. Store in the refrigerator or freezer until ready to eat. Enjoy!

Tips for Ultimate Enjoyment

- Keep a journal with drying times for different items as a reference
- Use only the highest quality food for best performance
- Vegetables and fruits should be fresh and fully ripe
- Slice foods evenly
- Let produce cool before testing for dryness
- Do not overload trays
- Do not overlap foods on the drying trays
- Do not dry with empty trays in the dehydrator
- Package dried foods properly
- Use dried fruits within one year, and vegetables within six months

Fruit Preparation & Testing For Dryness

Apples

Preparation: Peel (if desired) and core. Cut into rings or slices about 1/4-inch thick. Dip in lemon juice solution to avoid darkening.

Texture: Leathery and pliable with no moist areas in center.

Apricots

Preparation: Remove pits. Cut in halves and press flat to break up fibers that hold moisture. Treat to avoid darkening.

Texture: Leathery and pliable with no moist areas in center.

Bananas

Preparation: Do not use bruised or over-ripe bananas. Peel and cut into 1/8-inch slices. Treat to avoid darkening.

Texture: Leathery. Dried bananas will be sticky even when dry due to sugar content.

Berries (blueberries, cranberries)

Preparation: Crack skins by dipping berries in boiling water for 30 seconds. Spread on trays in single layer.

Texture: Hard.

Cherries

Preparation: Remove pits and cut in half, or dip whole cherries in boiling water for 30 seconds to crack skins.

Texture: Shriveled and leathery. Some varieties are sticky even when dried.

Citrus fruits (peel)

Preparation: Remove 1/8-inch of outer peel (use only no-color-added fruit). Remove all white areas. Arrange in a single layer on the tray.

Texture: Crisp.

Figs

Preparation: Leave small figs whole or cut larger figs in half. Crack skins of whole figs by dipping in boiling water for 30 seconds. Dry skin side down.

Texture: Leathery, pliable, slightly sticky.

Grapes

Preparation: Use seedless varieties. Cut in half or crack skins by dipping whole grapes in boiling water for 30 seconds.

Texture: Leathery and sticky with no moist areas in center.

Nectarines & Peaches

Preparation: Peel, remove pit, and slice into 1/4-inch slices. Dip in lemon juice solution to prevent darkening.

Texture: Leathery and pliable with no moist areas in center.

Pears

Preparation: Slice 1/4-inch thick (peeled or unpeeled). Dip in lemon juice solution to prevent darkening.

Texture: Leathery and chewy.

Pineapples

Preparation: Cut into 1/2-inch slices.

Texture: Pliable and crisp. Somewhat sticky.

Plums

Preparation: Dry small plums whole. Cut larger plums in half or slice 1/2 inch thick. Crack skins on whole plums by dipping in boiling water for 1 to 2 minutes.

Texture: Leathery and pliable.

Rhubarb

Preparation: Slice 3/8-inch thick crosswise.

Texture: Brittle.

Strawberries

Preparation: Cut into 1/4-inch slices.

Texture: Hard.