



Using, Storing and Preserving Plums



Prepared by:
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Michigan-grown plums are available mid-July through September.



Yield

14 pounds per 7-quart canner load

9 pounds per 9-pint canner load

1 bushel is 56 pounds — 22 to 36 quarts, average of 2 pounds per quart

How to preserve

Canning

Quality: Select deep-colored, mature fruit of ideal quality for eating fresh or cooking. Plums may be packed in water or syrup.

Syrups for use in canning fruits

Recommended varieties

Early Magic, Early Golden, Methley, Shiro, Vibrant, Vanette, Santa Rosa, Starking Delicious, Ozark Premier, Burbank, Redheart, Rubyqueen, Castleton, NY6, Fortune, Early Italian, Stanley, Lydecker, Simka, Valor, N9, Bluefre, Long John, Autumn Sweet, Blue Damson, Italian, Tulare Giant, Empress, Alderman

Food Safety and Storage

- Purchase fruits that are not bruised or damaged.
- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- Keep away from raw meat and meat juices to prevent cross-contamination.
- For best quality and to preserve nutrients, preserve no more than your family can consume in one year.

Type of Syrup	Percent Sugar*	Cups of Sugar** Per Quart Liquid	Yield of Syrup in Cups	How Syrup is Used Commercially
Very light	10%	½	4 ½	
Light	20%	1	4 ¾	Very sweet fruit
Medium	30%	1 ¾	5	Sweet apples, sweet cherries, berries, grapes
Heavy	40%	2 ¾	5 1/3	Tart apples, apricots, sour cherries, gooseberries, nectarines, pears, peaches, plums
Very heavy	50%	4	6	Very sour fruit

*Approximate

**In general, up to one-half of the sugar may be replaced by corn syrup or mild-flavored honey. A larger proportion of corn syrup may be used if a very bland, light-colored type is selected.

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Stem and wash plums. To can whole, prick skins on two sides of plums with a fork to prevent splitting. Freestone varieties may be halved and pitted. If you use syrup, prepare very light, light or medium syrup.

Hot pack – Add plums to water or hot syrup and boil 2 minutes. Cover saucepan and let stand 20 to 30 minutes. Fill jars with hot plums and cooking liquid or syrup, leaving 1/2 inch headspace.

Raw pack – Fill jars with raw plums, packing firmly. Add hot water or syrup, leaving 1/2 inch headspace.

Remove air bubbles, wipe rims, adjust lids and process. Processing directions for canning plums in a boiling-water bath or a dial- or weighted-gauge pressure canner are given in Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 1. Recommended process time for plums, halved or whole, in a boiling-water canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time (in minutes) at altitudes of			
		0 - 1,000 ft.	1,001 - 3,000 ft.	3,001 - 6,000 ft.	Above 6,000 ft.
Hot or raw	Pints	20	25	30	35
	Quarts	25	30	35	40

Table 2. Process times for plums in a dial-gauge pressure canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time (minutes)	Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of			
			0 - 2,000 ft.	2,001 - 4,000 ft.	4,001 - 6,000 ft.	6,001 - 8,000 ft.
Hot or raw	Pints or quarts	10	6 lb.	7 lb.	8 lb.	9 lb.

Table 3. Process times for plums in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time (minutes)	Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of	
			0 - 1,000 ft.	Above 1,000 ft.
Hot or raw	Pints or quarts	10	5 lb.	10 lb.

Let jars stand undisturbed for 24 hours, remove rings, wash jars, label, date and store. Food in jars that do not seal must be reprocessed in a clean jar with a new lid or refrigerated.

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Freezing

Preparation – Select firm, ripe fruit soft enough to yield to slight pressure. Sort and wash. Leave whole or cut in halves or quarters, and pit.

Syrup pack – Use cold 40 percent to 50 percent syrup, depending on tartness of fruit. For a better quality product, add 1/2 teaspoon (1500 mg) ascorbic acid per quart of syrup. Put plums directly into cold syrup in container, starting with 1/2 cup syrup to a pint container. Press fruit

down and add syrup to cover, leaving headspace (amount of headspace varies by type of container). Seal, label, date and freeze.

Plum sauce – Boil well-ripened clingstone plums without water until soft; then remove pits and skins. Continue cooking the pulp and juice until it thickens. Add one part sugar (with spices, if desired) to four parts plums.

Cool and package, leaving headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze.

Syrups for Use in Freezing Fruits

Type of Syrup	Percent Syrup*	Cups of Sugar **	Cups of Water	Yield of Syrup in Cups
Very light	10%	½	4	4 ½ cups
Light	20%	1	4	4 ¾ cups
Medium	30%	1 ¾	4	5 cups
Heavy	40%	2 ¾	4	5 1/3 cups
Very heavy	50%	4	4	6 cups

*Approximate

**In general, up to one-half of the sugar may be replaced by corn syrup or mild-flavored honey. A larger proportion of corn syrup may be used if a very bland, light-colored type is selected.

References

Andress, Elizabeth and Judy A. Harrison. *So Easy to Preserve*. Bulletin 989, 6th Edition. Cooperative Extension University of Georgia, 2014.

National Center for Food Preservation. <http://nchfp.uga.edu/>

Michigan Plum Advisory Board. www.michiganplum.com

Find out more about Michigan Fresh at msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi_fresh.