

CANNING LIDS 101



There are three important things to know. First, we recommend using only Ball®/Kerr® brand lids. They are BPA free, and offer the safest, most reliable results of any lid on the market. The second most important thing you need to know is never use a lid twice. After the first use, the lid will no longer seal effectively, so a fresh lid must be used every time.

And now for the third and perhaps best news: Pre-heating lids is not required! After extensive testing by our Quality Assurance Team, we determined that it is no longer necessary to pre-warm lids before use. If you desire, it is still safe to simmer your lids before use, however, you should never boil them. Our recommendation for over 40 years has always been to simmer (180°F), not boil (212°F), the lids.

Why don't I have to preheat my lids?

After extensive testing by our Quality Assurance Team, we determined that it is no longer necessary to pre-warm lids before use. If you desire, it is still safe to simmer your lids before use, however, you should never boil them. Our recommendation for over 40 years has always been to simmer (180°F), not boil (212°F), the lids.

When was this change made?

Believe it or not, in 1969! At that time we switched our sealing gasket from being latex-based to Plastisol. Latex required pre-heating to soften it prior to canning in order to create an effective seal. The Plastisol does not require preheating, but doing so will not damage it.

What about sterilizing the jars?

Pre-sterilizing jars and lids is not necessary in the home canning process. If you are following a recipe that processes in your canner for 10 minutes or more, the sterilization will occur during that time.

How should I prepare my lids now?

Removing the simmering step was designed to make the home canning process easier than ever, speeding up the time it takes to preserve your favorite fresh, local produce. This is entirely unrelated to the BPA-free coating change in our lids. That change was made to the underside coating and did not impact the sealing compound. After extensive testing from our quality assurance team, Jarden Home Brands' current recommendation is to prep lids by washing with warm, soapy water and keep at room temperature until ready for preserving.

Why haven't I heard about this before now?

We understand there are some inconsistencies in our current recommendations and what is printed in previous editions of the Ball Blue Book. Jarden Home Brands has already announced these changes to the public via its website, www.FreshPreserving.com, live webcasts and canning demonstrations as well as through updated packaging changes and on social media. We understand that many of our consumers are experienced canners who no longer seek instructional updates, but it's always important to ensure that you're following not only the USDA's most up-to-date recommendations, but also those of the manufacturer. We are trying to communicate the change with as many preservers as possible.

Won't this lead to more seal failures?

Any seal failures are likely unrelated to the updates in the Ball or Kerr canning lids as the sealing compound has remained, essentially, the same since 1969. If you are experiencing seal failure, please visit our Problem Solver page to explore possible solutions.

While those are the three most important things to know, they just scratch the surface! Here's everything you need to know about lids.

Canning lid:

a one or two piece lid that seals onto a jar for preserving fresh food. The lid is airtight and keeps food shelf stable for up to a year if processed correctly. Lids come in two varieties, metal coated and plastic.

Metal Coated Lids (one time use, only) are the only USDA recommended type of lid for home canning. We recommend Ball®/Kerr® brands. They're Made in the USA, BPA-free and phthalate-free and the standard for use in testing with at the USDA and universities for developing home canning guidelines Other brands are Made in China or other countries, and may contain BPA and phthalates, known to buckle easily, frequent seal failures

Plastic (reusable): Not within USDA canning guidelines, solid rubber gasket does not vent well which means less of a vacuum seal, requires extra caution when tightening bands on hot jars (outside of normal canning process), expensive for gifting, more difficult to get a seal than conventional lids. Once used, they do not flex like normal canning lids. Testing has shown that these lids may lose half their vacuum over the course of a year, often within six months.

Tip: Use Ball® Plastic Storage Caps can be used for storing foods in the fridge or freezer

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PECTIN CALCULATOR

Find out how much pectin you'll need for your jellies and jams, and which kinds of fruits will work best.

GET STARTED (</TOOLS/PECTIN-CALCULATOR>)

CANNING TERMS

Access our handy glossary to learn the ins and outs of canning technology.

VIEW GLOSSARY (</TOOLS/CANNING-GLOSSARY>)

HISTORY OF LID TECHNOLOGY

Check out the history behind Ball® and Kerr® lids.

LEARN MORE (</SITES/ALL/THEMES/FRESHPRESERVING/LIBRARY/TIMELINEOFLIDTECHNOLOGY.PDF>)