



Food
Preservation
for Youth

Method 5: Drying (Adv.)

Dry My Fruit Leather

Ingredients:

for about 1 tray/4 rolls; multiply as needed

- ___ 2 cups (one pint) prepared apples, peaches, pears, pineapple, cherries, or strawberries
- ___ 2 teaspoons bottled lemon juice
or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ascorbic acid (375 mg)
- ___ Vegetable oil cooking spray
- ___ Spices/toppings from 'Want to Experiment?' (optional)

Equipment:

- ___ Food dehydrator or oven that registers 140°F
- ___ Small electric fan (only if using an oven)
- ___ Dehydrator trays
or 12x17" or 13x15" cookie sheets if using an oven
- ___ Fruit roll tray liners
or 12x17" or 13x15" cookie sheets if using an oven
- ___ Ruler or headspace tool
- ___ Colander
- ___ Blender or food processor
- ___ Sink, dish cloth, and soap
- ___ Medium mixing bowl
- ___ Small paring knife
- ___ Apple corer (for apples only)
- ___ Cherry pitter (for cherries only)
- ___ Peeler (for apples, peaches, pears)
- ___ Large knife (for fresh, whole pineapple only)
- ___ Measuring spoons and measuring cups
- ___ Small spoon or spatula
- ___ Large cutting board
- ___ Dull knife and/or cookie cutters
- ___ Roll of plastic wrap
- ___ Freezer bags or other sealing container
- ___ Permanent marker
or pens and labels
- ___ Kitchen timer
- ___ Thermometer (only if using oven)



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___ Plug in dehydrator with lid on the base (so that it is not touching anything) or slide oven racks to be 2-3 inches apart. Preheat oven to 140°F.

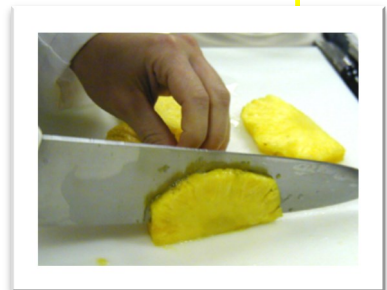
___ Wash hands for 20 seconds and dry well. Wash and dry liners or sheets and cutting board.

___ Use a colander to rinse and drain fruit.

★ Carefully remove core and outer skin from apples, peaches, pears, and pineapples. Always push peeler and knife blades away from your fingers. Pull stems from cherries and use pitter to remove pits. Remove leafy caps of strawberries.

★ Carefully cut fruit into chunks. Put chunks into blender or food processor.

★ Measure and add 2 tsp. of lemon juice or 1/8 tsp. of ascorbic acid to the fruit. If desired, measure and add 1/8 tsp. of chosen spice. Purée until well blended.



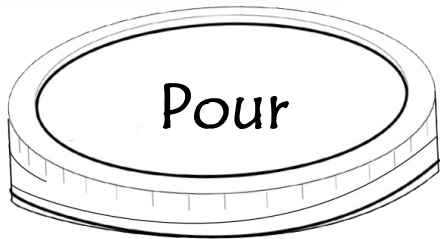
★ = **BE EXTRA CAREFUL!**



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— Lightly spray tray liners or cookie sheets with vegetable cooking oil spray, or line cookie sheets with plastic wrap.

★ Place liner on dryer tray. Pour purée onto tray or sheet. Spread evenly to measure $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Pour smaller (1/2 cup) portions for faster drying. Repeat as needed.



★ Remove lid from dehydrator and place the trays on the base or slide the sheets into the oven. Place lid on dehydrator or leave oven cracked 2-6 inches, with a fan directed near the opening.



— Allow to dry. Check that the temperature stays at 140°F, adjusting as needed.

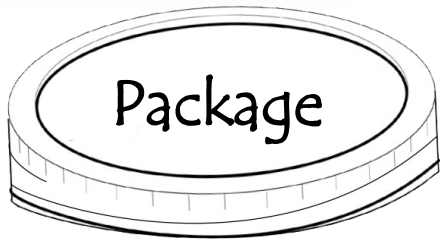
— Wash used equipment and tools.

— After 4 hours for individual portions or 6 hours for full sheets, begin testing for doneness by gently touching the leather with a clean fingertip near the center of the leather. It is ready when no fingerprint is left. Continue to test until it is done, which may take up to 12 hours. As long as the fruit leathers have dried for several hours, it's okay to turn the heat off overnight and finish the next day.

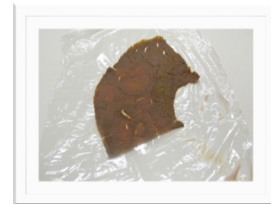
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- ___ Once leather is done, turn off dehydrator or oven. Gently peel leather from tray or sheet and place on a clean cutting board while still warm.
- ★ If leather has not already been portioned into individual sizes, then cut leather into quarters or use cookie cutters to cut out shapes.
- ___ Prepare pieces of plastic wrap to be about 2 inches longer and wider than the pieces of leather.
- ___ Lay each piece of leather on a piece of plastic wrap and roll them together. Twist each end of plastic wrap tightly to close.
- ___ To store fruit leather rolls, seal them in a plastic bag or an airtight container. Label bags or containers with your name, type of fruit leather, and the date.
- ___ Clean the rest of the equipment with soap and water.
- ___ Store fruit leather in a cool, dark, dry place (like a food pantry) for up to one month.



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