

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR DEHYDRATOR

PREPARING YOUR DEHYDRATOR FOR USE

LIST OF COMPONENTS

1. **On/Off switch**
2. **Variable Temperature Control Dial**
3. **Door**
4. **Dehydrating Trays (NOT DISHWASHER SAFE)**
5. **Door Latch**
6. **Non-stick drip sheet (Not Pictured)**



FIRST TIME USE / CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove the appliance from its packaging. Make sure all parts are present and undamaged. Save packaging if needed or dispose of waste properly.
2. Thoroughly **HAND** wash the trays with warm soapy water and dry completely. **TRAYS ARE NOT DISHWASHER SAFE.** Do not submerge base of appliance in water. Do not let water get into the fan area.
3. Place appliance on flat, stable surface such as a table or bench. One by one, add trays to the dehydrator making sure that they are all securely in place.
4. Turn ON/OFF switch to the ON position. Set temperature dial to 90 degrees, and allow unit to run for 45 minutes. This will remove any moisture inside still present from the initial cleaning.

USING YOUR DEHYDRATOR

OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make sure the power switch is turned to OFF.
2. Place the appliance on a dry, clean surface away from children, pets and flammable liquids.
3. Plug the appliance into a standard wall outlet. Make sure the electrical outlet is not damaged. Position the appliance at least 6 inches from any wall or object to allow for proper air flow.
4. Make sure all packaging materials have been removed from appliance.
5. Turn the power switch to ON. The dehydrator will begin to heat up quickly.
6. Preheat the appliance for 15 minutes prior to loading trays into the unit.
7. Follow recipes and preparation guidelines for the food you want to dehydrate.
8. Remove any excess marinade or liquid from the food. Excess liquid will increase dehydrating time, pat dry with a clean paper towel.
9. Use hand protection when sliding trays out for loading the food. Allow ¼" to ½" between the food pieces for air circulation and even drying.
10. Slide the trays carefully back into the dehydrator, using two hands if needed.
11. Latch the dehydrator door to ensure that the appliance will work properly.

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- Set the temperature by adjusting the knob on the top of the appliance.
- Check your food after six hours. Check again every two hours until desired dehydration has taken place. Drying time can depend on several factors; air temperature, size/thickness of food, and humidity can affect the amount of time it takes for the food to be dried.
- If moisture collects on the top of food surfaces, pat dry with a clean paper towel.

Temperature Suggestions

Fruits	135-145°F / 57-63°C
Herbs	95-125°F / 35-52°C
Leafy Greens	104°F / 40°C
Meat, Fish	145-160°F / 63-71°C
Vegetables	120-135°F / 49-57°C
Yogurt	115°F / 46°C
Raising Bread	110-115°F / 43-46°C

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

- Make sure the dehydrator is unplugged and room temperature before cleaning.
- Thoroughly HAND wash the trays with warm soapy water and dry completely. TRAYS ARE NOT DISHWASHER SAFE. Do not submerge the appliance in water. Do not let water get into the fan area.
- Do not use metal brushes or abrasive cleaners when cleaning the dehydrator, because it can damage the surface.
- Make sure the appliance is completely dry and room temperature before storing for long periods of time.

PREPARATION OF FOODS

DEHYDRATING TIPS

- IMPORTANT: THE DURATION OF DRYING STATED IN THIS GUIDE IS APPROXIMATE.**
- The duration of drying depends on the temperature and humidity of the room, the level of moisture in the products, thickness of the pieces, etc.
- To ensure consistent results, always dry items of similar thickness together.
- It is important to dry at the correct temperature for the item you are dehydrating because vitamins within food can react negatively to high temperatures. Pay careful attention to your temperature settings when drying fruits, vegetables and meats.
- Wash products before putting in the dehydrator.
- Do not put wet products into dehydrator. Pat them dry with clean paper towel.
- Cut off the spoiled parts of products.
- Remove all pits, cores, seeds and most skins.
- Always leave $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch spacing between food items to allow for even air flow.
- Slice the products in such a way to situate evenly freely between the trays.
- The length of drying time depends on the thickness of sliced pieces.
- You can change the position of the trays if products did not dry evenly.
- Some fruits can be covered in their natural protective skin or peel, affecting the duration of drying. You may boil or cook foods for about 1-2 minutes and then put into cold water to help soften outer layers.
- Use food that is ripe, but not over ripe.
- Your dehydrator has a clear front for easy observation of drying progress; so avoid opening the dehydrator excessively during use. Doing so will add time to the drying process.
- Latch the dehydrator door to ensure that the appliance will work properly.
- Once your food is dried to the desired level, store it in a sealed container in a cool dry place so that it does not reabsorb moisture. The dehydrated food will naturally have less moisture in it than the air around it and will absorb moisture if left out for an extended period. Note: Storing in a freezer is acceptable and will prolong the life of the food.

18. It is best to select the freshest, highest quality foods available to dehydrate. That is the beauty of dehydration—preserving the best!
19. Immature fruits and vegetables will not have the great flavor of fully ripened foods.
20. Foods high in sugar (like certain fruits) will darken during the dehydration process, and that is normal. If desired, you can soak foods to be dried in lemon or pineapple juice to help lessen this effect, and add flavor. You can also sprinkle with spices or Jell-O powder for enhanced flavors.
21. Bananas purchased in-store are usually processed before drying. Drying bananas in your Chard Dehydrator will not yield the same crispness.
22. Vacuum sealing is the best method for storing dehydrated foods.

DRYING HOMEMADE JERKY:

Jerky is the most popular food to make in dehydrators. Making it yourself can save you money and allow you to create your own recipes. Use any lean meat you prefer such as beef, venison or fish.

SAFETY INFORMATION:

1. Sanitation and a clean working area are essential. Wash hands thoroughly with warm soapy water prior to making jerky.
2. Meat should be frozen or refrigerated until it's ready to be used.
3. Do not allow raw meat to come in contact with the finished product.
4. Use a sanitizing solution or diluted bleach to clean all surfaces when done.
5. If marinating meat for whole meat jerky, always keep your marinade in the refrigerator.
6. We recommend that you purchase a pre-packaged jerky spice and cure kit. Follow the instructions for proper seasoning and curing.

PREPARING SLICED JERKY:

1. Sliced jerky is sliced from bigger pieces of meat. To help slice meat evenly place the meat in the freezer until slightly hard to the touch but NOT frozen. For best results slice meat ¼" thick.
2. While there are many recipes for making your own jerky, we recommend using a pre-packaged jerky spice and cure kit. Follow the directions provided with the kit.

3. Place the meat on the drying racks, making sure they are not touching or overlapping. Jerky typically takes 4-8 hours to dry properly.
4. When the desired dehydration is achieved, remove jerky from the trays and let cool for at least 30 minutes.
5. Use paper towels to remove any excess oil and fat that may be on the jerky.
6. Package your food items after they have cooled. Store in a covered or sealed container in a cool, dry place away from direct light. Label your food items.
7. If you would like to store your jerky for more than one month, it is recommended that you store in a refrigerator or freezer.

PREPARING GROUND JERKY:

1. Ground jerky is made from ground meat. Use pre-packaged jerky spice and cure kit prior to drying and follow their instructions for best results.
2. Once the mix is ready, place the meat into a jerky gun and carefully extrude the formed jerky strips – making sure that the meat is not touching or overlapping. Jerky typically takes 4-8 hours to dry properly.
3. When the desired dehydration is achieved, remove the jerky from the trays and let cool for at least 30 minutes.
4. Use paper towels to remove any excess oil or fat from the meat.
5. Store in a covered or sealed container in a cool, dry place away from direct light.
6. If you would like to store your jerky for more than one month, it is recommended that you store in a refrigerator or freezer.

DRYING VEGETABLES:

Unlike other food, vegetables lose a lot of moisture toward the end of the dehydrating process. Therefore, they must be checked constantly near the end of the drying process.

PREPARING VEGETABLES:

1. Wash your vegetables thoroughly to remove any dirt. Peel the vegetable and slice it into even sizes so they dry at the same rate.
2. Pretreatment is necessary for most vegetables in order to neutralize their natural enzymes. Steam blanching is the preferred method.

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- To Steam Blanch: Bring a large pot filled 75% with water to a boil. Place your vegetables in a colander or basket and place carefully in the pot, ensuring that there is a small gap for the steam to enter. Cover with a lid. See vegetable drying guidelines chart located in this Care and Use Guide.
- After blanching for the recommended amount of time, immediately place the vegetables in cold water to stop the cooking process.
- Remove the vegetables from the cold water; dry using clean towels.
- Place the vegetables in a single layer on the dehydrator trays, ensuring they are not touching or overlapping.
- See Temperature Suggestions and Drying Guidelines charts for recommended temperatures and drying times. To determine if your vegetables are done drying, remove and check a few pieces from different trays in the dehydrator. If you cannot break the vegetable in half with little effort, place them back on the dehydrator for more time. Repeat the process until finished.
- Once the vegetables are dried to your liking, let to cool for 30 minutes.
- Store in a covered or sealed container in a cool, dry place away from direct light.

DRYING HERBS:

- Drying your own herbs is an excellent way to save money and ensure you have a plentiful supply year round.
- Wash herbs in cool water to remove any dirt.
- Lightly dry, and place on the dehydrator trays.
- Drying time for herbs is 30-90 minutes. Regularly check herbs for dryness every fifteen minutes, at minimum. Herbs are dry when you can easily crumble them in your fingers.
- Once the herbs are dried to your liking, allow to cool for 30 minutes.
- Store in a covered or sealed container in a cool, dry place away from direct light.

FRUIT DRYING GUIDELINES

Fruit	Preparation	Pretreatment Necessary	Average Drying Time
Apples	Peel, if needed. Core, cut into slices 1/8" to 1/4" thick.	Yes	2-9 hours
Apricots	Slice in half, remove pit, and cut into 3/8" slices.	Yes	8-16 hours
Bananas	Peel and cut into 1/4" to 3/8" slices.	Yes	6-8 hours
Blueberries	Remove stem. Put in boiling water for 40-60 seconds. Put in ice water for skin to crack.	No	9-17 hours
Cherries	Remove pit and stem. Cut, chop or leave whole.	No	15-23 hours
Cranberries	Remove stem. Put in boiling water for 40-60 seconds. Put in ice water for skin to crack.	No	10-18 hours
Grapes	Cut in half or leave whole. Dry. Put in boiling water for 40-60 seconds. Put in ice water for skin to crack.	No	13-21 hours
Kiwi	Peel and cut into 1/4" to 1/2" slices.	No	2-6 hours
Nectarines	Cut and remove pit. Quarter or slice 3/8" thick.	Yes	5-10 hours (slices) 8-16 hours (halves or quarters)

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FRUIT DRYING GUIDELINES (continued)

Fruit	Preparation	Pretreatment Necessary	Average Drying Time
Pears	Peel, core and slice 1/8" thick.	Yes	5-13 hours
Pineapple	Peel, core and slice 3/8" thick.	No	4-12 hours
Prunes/Plums	Quarter or halve and discard pit.	No	8-15 hours
Rhubarb	Trim and throw away leaves. Cut into 1/8" slices.	No	4-9 hours
Strawberries	Remove top. Slice 3/8" thick.	No	4-12 hours

VEGETABLE DRYING GUIDELINES

Vegetable	Preparation	Steam Blanching Time	Average Drying Time
Asparagus	Cut in 3/4" to 1" pieces.	3-5 minutes	4-8 hours
Beets	Cook until tender, peel, cut into 1/4" thick strips.	N/A	2-7 hours
Broccoli	Cut into pieces.	2-2½ minutes	2-8 hours
Carrots	Peel and cut off each end, dice into 1/4" pieces.	2-2½ minutes	2-8 hours
Cauliflower	Cut into pieces.	3-6 minutes	3-8 hours
Celery	Trim edges. Cut into 3/8" slices.	3 minutes	3-5 hours

VEGETABLE DRYING GUIDELINES (continued)

Vegetable	Preparation	Steam Blanching Time	Average Drying Time
Corn	Cut corn from cob and blanch.	1-1½ minutes	5-11 hours
Green/wax beans	Take off ends and strings. Cut in 3/4" to 1" pieces.	3-3½ minutes	4-11 hours
Mushrooms	Clean and slice 1/2" thick.	N/A	3-7 hours
Onions	Peel outer skin. Cut off top and ends. Cut into 3/8" slices.	N/A	3-7 hours
Peas	Shell	4 minutes	3-9 hours
Peppers and Pimientos	Remove core, stem, and inner partitions cut into 1/8" strips.	N/A	4-10 hours
Potatoes	Peel and cut into 1/8" slices.	5-9 minutes	2-8 hours
Summer squash and zucchini	Cut ends. Cut into 3/8" wide slices.	3½-4 minutes	2-6 hours
Tomatoes	Peel, if needed. Cut into slices 1/2" wide.	N/A	4-11 hours