



# Palmetto Ace Home Center



August 2018

www.palmettoace.com

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*It's a problem that's plagued pickle-makers for centuries: how do you find a pickle recipe that results in perfectly crisp cucumbers with that highly sought-after 'crunch' when you take a bite?*

In the past when I'd go to make my homemade pickles, Prairie Husband would always cautiously raise an eyebrow and say in this questioning tone of voice, "They're gonna be crunchy pickles, right?"

*To which I respond, "Er, sure honey... you bet."*

Honestly, it took me quite a while to figure out how to get consistently crunchy pickles- I tried all sorts of things, and had mixed results. And like with anything else, if you talk to a dozen different people, you'll get a dozen different answers.

In my quest for the ultimate crunchy pickle recipe, I've collected a number of little tricks, so I decided to compile a list. Keep in mind you *don't* have to use ALL of them though- and the first two ideas are the ones that make the *most* difference... At least in my humble opinion.

## 5 Secrets for Crunchy Pickles

**1. Use small, firm cucumbers.** This is, hands-down, the most important! If you start with a big ol' soft cucumber, you'll end up with big ol' soft pickles. Always, always select the smallest, most firm cucumbers and leave the big soft ones out of the pickle jar. It's a natural law of sorts- if you are using ginormous, overgrown cukes for your pickles, ain't nothing gonna turn them crunchy... No matter how creative you get or how many prayers you say while they are in the water bath canner.

**2. Jar them immediately after picking, or as soon as possible.** Going straight from the vine to the jar is the best, and I always try to plan room in my schedule to can up a batch right away on pickle-picking day. However, I've still had good results using farmer's market cukes- providing they are firm when I buy them, and I don't leave them on the counter for days and days.

**3. Soak cucumbers in an ice water bath for a couple hours.** If I can't get to work canning my cucumbers immediately after picking them (or when I get home from the farmer's market), submerging them in an icy bowl of water in the fridge will help them firm up/stay firm.

**4. Cut off the blossom end of cucumber.** The blossom-end of a cucumber is said to contain enzymes which can cause mushy pickles. Cutting it off is your best bet.

**5. Add tannins to the jar.** This may include oak leaves, grape leaves, or black tea. Honestly? This trick is *always* recommended, but *I've had hit-or-miss results with it...* If you have oak leaves or grape leaves handy, it definitely can't hurt to toss one in each jar. Or, add a 1/2 teaspoon of loose black tea to each jar. But again, it **won't** turn already-soft cucumbers magically crispy.



## --5 EXPERT TIPS FOR-- EXTRA-CRUNCHY PICKLES

THEPRAIRIEHOMESTEAD.COM



<https://www.theprairiehomestead.com/2016/08/crispy-crunchy-pickles.html>

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