Dehydrating is one of the most ancient ways of preserving food, for long term storage.

Benefits of dehydrated foods

* Dried produce take up little space
* Perfect for travel as they are light weight and usually not very fragile
* Takes neither freezer, nor refrigerator to store them (saves energy)
* Ready-to-eat treats
* Can be added to soups, salads, oatmeal or smoothies

Allows you to buy in season and save for later or to preserve your garden bounty.

Drying Fruit

Prepare for drying:

Best fruit you can get as drying concentrates flavours.

Wash and maybe peel.

Cut into consistently same thickness, so they dry at same rate.

Soak browning fruit in equal parts lemon juice and water for 10 minutes.

Sun drying is most low-tech, low-cost solution. It is dependent on location and 30C or more. The sun needs to shine for most of the day, and there has to be low humidity.

Drying in the oven: 60C with space around racks and between fruit of same thickness.

Turn every 30 min for 4-8 hours. Remove when dry and chewy and cool before storing in jars.

In dryer: small round or stacked box version available.

Has settings and you can make fruit leathers etc.

In hot water cupboard

On trays – turn often

Over wood fired heater (see attachment)

Check for squishiness, stop when all juice has gone, and it is chewy.

Let cool after drying.

When storing, check after a few days, if any moisture present, put it back in dryer

Suitable produce:

Apples

Pears

Berries

Bananas

Plums, apricots, peaches

Drying vegetables

Prepare for drying: choose just ripe produce

Soak in citric acid solution - 1/4 tsp citric acid to 1lt of water

Or blanch 4-7mins

Zucchini

Sugar snap peas (blanch beforehand to keep colour)

[Sun-drying vegetables and fruits for long-term storage: 40 clever and creative ideas](https://mydesiredhome.com/sun-drying-vegetables-and-fruits-for-long-term-storage-40-clever-and-creative-ideas/)

**Drying herbs**

Hang a bunch in a dark dry place for a week or so,

Crumple leaves into a glass jar and put in cool dark place

[Learn How to Make Your Own Herb Tea Blends](https://www.thespruceeats.com/make-your-own-herb-tea-blend-1762127)

A herb tea is best made up of different herbs:

The Structure:

While the field is wide open for whatever herbs you want to try, most good herbal tea blends follow a structure to provide a range of tastes.

* Flowering notes. The basic blend includes flowery notes of some sort. Common options include violet flowers, [chamomile](https://www.thespruceeats.com/types-of-chamomile-766430) flowers, [dandelion](https://www.thespruceeats.com/how-to-make-dandelion-herbal-jelly-1762138) petals, calendula petals, or wild rose petals. Add one part of this herb.
* Placeholder flavor. After adding the flowers (fresh or dried), add a place-holding flavor. This will be the flavor that ties everything together and keeps an iced tea tasting strong enough to withstand a few ice cubes melting into it. Dried red raspberry leaves or [dried nettles](https://www.thespruceeats.com/how-to-harvest-and-prepare-nettles-2952739) work well here. Add two parts of these herbs.
* Fruity component. Next, a fruity or naturally sweet component is nice. Dried rosehips are a common choice here. These are sold in many herb shops or health food stores if you have not harvested your own. Another option here is [hibiscus flowers](https://www.thespruceeats.com/hibiscus-tea-recipe-2355503), which are not only sweet and lemony flavored but also impart a rich, red color to your teas. Add one part of these herbs.
* Cooling herb. Especially for summer iced tea, a cooling herb is an ideal final ingredient. [Mint](https://www.thespruceeats.com/growing-and-using-mint-427618) is usually most common here. Neem is another example. You can add any combination or variety of available mint herbs you have. Another naturally cooing herb that works well to round out your blend is borage—the leaves or flowers (or both) can be used. Add one part cooling herbs to finish your recipe.

Other Blends:

ImmuniTea. This is a recipe borrowed from [Real Food Outlaws](http://realfoodoutlaws.com/immunitea-wellness-herbal-tea/). It uses classic immune-boosting ingredients that are rich in antioxidants and vitamins. It makes a great hot tea for the winter colds-and-flu season.

* 1 part [elderberries](https://www.thespruceeats.com/the-best-way-to-freeze-elderberries-1327670)
* 1 part elderflowers
* 1 part chamomile
* 1 part [rose hips](https://www.thespruceeats.com/herbs-spices-4162170)
* 1 part astragalus
* 1 part echinacea

Simply mix all the herbs together and store in an airtight container. To brew, use a tea ball to steep 1 teaspoon of tea blend in hot water for 20 minutes.

Tranquil Tea. This one comes from the Bulk Food Store, and contains ingredients chosen to relax and calm you.

* 4 parts chamomile
* 2 parts [lemongrass](https://www.thespruceeats.com/what-is-lemongrass-765171)
* 2 parts rose petals

Combine the herbs in a glass jar and shake to mix. To use, add 1 teaspoon of tea mix for each serving to a tea ball or strainer and steep by covering with boiling water for 5 to 10 minutes. If you wish, you can add a touch of honey for sweetness.

Stomach Soother. This recipe from [Wellness Mama](https://wellnessmama.com/5442/health-boosting-herbal-teas/) is said to be both calming and to soothe stomach aches and other digestive problems. For each serving, the ingredients are:

* 2 tsp mint leaves
* 1/2 tsp fennel seeds
* Pinch of dried [ginger](https://www.thespruceeats.com/what-is-ginger-1807768) (optional)

Pour 1 cup of boiling water over the tea mixture, cover and steep for 5 minutes before

drinking.