BONUS 3

# The 30-Day Food Preservation Skills Challenge

*One task a day, from a clean kitchen to full shelves, a crock of kraut, and a sealed bucket of staples.*

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*A free companion to The Essential Off-Grid Food Preservation Manual*

# How the Challenge Works

*One task a day for 30 days. Most take under an hour; a few are batch days. Skip ahead or swap days to fit your harvest and schedule.*

**By Day 30 you will have:**

- A safe, organized off-grid preserving kitchen and calibrated tools
- Shelves of water-bath and pressure-canned food
- A crock of sauerkraut, a batch of jerky, dried fruit, and dried herbs
- A sealed bucket of long-term staples and a rodent-proof storage area
- A 12-month calendar, a pantry inventory, and a budget for the year

## My starting point

| Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| Start date | |
| Rung of the Pantry Ladder today | |
| Heat source I will use | |
| Three foods I most want to preserve | |
| My goal for Day 30 | |

# Week 1 · Foundations and Safety

### Day 1 · Read the rules ☐

Read Chapter 2. Write the five unsafe practices you will never use on a card and post it in your kitchen.

### Day 2 · Find your altitude ☐

Look up your exact elevation and complete the altitude card in Bonus 1 (Project 2.2).

### Day 3 · Calibrate your thermometers ☐

Test every thermometer in ice water and boiling water (Project 2.1). Label any error.

### Day 4 · Audit your pantry supplies ☐

Check vinegar for 5% acidity, sort salts, buy bottled lemon juice and citric acid (Project 2.4).

### Day 5 · Calculate your food needs ☐

Complete the Household Food-Needs Calculator in Bonus 2 (Project 1.1).

### Day 6 · Survey your storage spaces ☐

Place a thermometer-hygrometer in your first candidate storage spot (Project 1.2). Move it daily this week.

### Day 7 · Build your spoilage kit ☐

Assemble the spoilage response kit (Project 2.3) and show your household where it is.

# Week 2 · Canning

### Day 8 · Set up your station ☐

Organize jars, lids, canner, and tools into a one-direction workflow (Section 3.5).

### Day 9 · Practice run ☐

Run your water-bath canner with jars of water on your chosen heat source. Time how long it takes to boil.

### Day 10 · Can applesauce or crushed tomatoes ☐

Make Project 4.1 or 4.2. Log the batch.

### Day 11 · Check seals and store ☐

Test every seal, remove bands, wash, label, and shelve. Note any failures and their causes.

### Day 12 · Pressure canner check ☐

Read your pressure canner manual. Inspect the gasket and vent; test your dial gauge or book a test.

### Day 13 · Pressure-can a vegetable ☐

Can green beans (Project 5.1) or another vegetable from Table 5.2.

### Day 14 · Pressure-can protein ☐

Can dry beans (Project 5.2) or chicken (Project 5.3).

# Week 3 · Drying, Pickling, and Fermenting

### Day 15 · Start a sauerkraut crock ☐

Make a 5-pound batch of sauerkraut (Project 11.1). Mark the date.

### Day 16 · Dry fruit ☐

Dry a batch of apple rings or other fruit (Project 7.2). Start conditioning.

### Day 17 · Make jerky the safe way ☐

Make jerky with a 160°F heat step (Project 8.1 or 8.2).

### Day 18 · Make quick pickles ☐

Make quick fresh-pack dills or pickled beets (Project 6.1 or 6.3).

### Day 19 · Dry herbs ☐

Harvest and hang or screen-dry a year's supply of one herb (Project 7.5).

### Day 20 · Skim and check ☐

Check the kraut, skim any film, and check conditioning jars for moisture.

### Day 21 · Start a sourdough starter ☐

Begin Project 11.4, or render a batch of lard or tallow (Project 8.3 or 14.3).

## Week 4 · Storage and Systems

**Day 22 · Pack a bucket** ☐
Pack a 5-gallon bucket of rice, wheat, or beans with Mylar and oxygen absorbers (Project 13.1).

**Day 23 · Rodent-proof your storage** ☐
Inspect and seal gaps; move all food off the floor (Project 13.4).

**Day 24 · Plan your cold storage** ☐
Choose a root cellar option for your home: basement corner, buried can, clamp, or sand boxes.

**Day 25 · Write your calendar** ☐
Fill in the 12-Month Preservation Calendar in Bonus 2 (Project 15.1).

**Day 26 · Start your inventory** ☐
Count everything you have preserved and stored, and hang inventory sheets (Project 15.2).

**Day 27 · Cook from the pantry** ☐
Cook one full meal using only preserved and stored food (Chapter 16).

**Day 28 · Budget the year** ☐
Complete the Supplies and Fuel Budget and order lids for two years (Project 15.4).

## Days 29 and 30 · Review

**Day 29 · Taste and evaluate** ☐

Taste your sauerkraut, pickles, dried fruit, and jerky. Note what you would change.

**Day 30 · Plan your next 90 days** ☐

Choose the next three foods and methods you will master, and schedule them on your calendar.

# Challenge Complete

*Record what you made and what you learned.*

| Food or skill | Quantity | What went well | What I will change |
|---|---|---|---|
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## My next 90 days

| Month | Food and method | Target |
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