

# Oven Dried Fruit (using only a light bulb)

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*An easy way to dehydrate fruit using the same power as an easy bake oven*

## **Ingredients:**

Fruit  
Lemon juice  
Cinnamon (optional)  
Parchment paper  
Thermometer

## **Directions:**

1. Remove the oven rack(s) and line with parchment paper.
2. Replace the oven appliance bulb with an incandescent, 100 watt, light bulb and turn the oven light on to heat the oven.
3. Depending on the type of fruit, core or remove the seeds, if necessary. The peel can be removed or left on.
4. Thinly slice the fruit. Try to cut the fruit in equal proportions so that it will dry evenly. Apple, banana, and strawberry slices work great. Smaller berries such as blueberries or Saskatoon berries can be left whole.
5. Mist the fruit with lemon juice or soak it in a lemon juice solution\* for up to 10 minutes.
6. Place the fruit on the parchment lined oven racks. (cinnamon can be sprinkled on apples at this time, if desired)
7. Place the racks in the oven. Using the thermometer, check the temperature. The optimal temperature is 140 degrees.
8. Be patient. Drying times will vary from 6 to more than 20 hours depending on your conditions and fruit. Apple slices generally take about 8 hours with this method.



The fruit will still be soft and pliable when dry, but should not be moist in the center when cut.

\*It is advisable to mist the fruit with straight lemon juice or soak it in the following solution to reduce the effects of oxidation. Apples, pears and bananas especially benefit from this treatment.

## **Lemon juice solution:**

Add one cup lemon juice to one litre of water; reduce or increase the amount depending on the quantity of fruit that you wish to treat. Soak the fruit in the solution for up to ten minutes. Drain well.

## **Oven temperature:**

Optimal temperature is 135 -145 degrees. It may take as much as 2 or 3 hours to reach the maximum temperature that your bulb will produce. Once you have tested this and know what to expect, in future, you may want to turn on your oven for about five minutes at the start to reach this temperature quicker, but be careful not to leave your oven on.

It may take some time experimenting to achieve a temperature in this range. Fruit will still dehydrate at a lower temperature but will require more time. If you reach temperatures above 150 degrees, all the better, but you will have to prop the door open slightly with something such as a dish towel to reduce the temperature. You will, however, gain the benefit of added air flow. This will speed up your drying time.

Temperatures achieved will vary depending on the type and size of your oven, brand/type of light bulb, wattage of light bulb, room temperature, etc. I recommend starting with a 100 watt bulb.

## **Notes on safety:**

***Use only incandescent bulbs; fluorescent bulbs will not generate enough heat and could result in injury. Always remember to replace the appliance bulb after dehydrating and prior to turning on your oven.***

## **Tips:**

- Switching placement of the racks every 4 to 5 hours can help fruit dry quicker and more consistently as will revolving the paper on the racks, however, proceed with caution on a hard surface. I do not recommend moving the paper while in the oven.
- Try experimenting with a rack of assorted fruits, berries, or even vegetables to find your favourites.
- Other spices or combinations such as nutmeg and ginger may add interest as will orange or lime juice instead of lemon.
- After about 8 hours in the oven you can begin checking for dryness. Most likely the fruit will take closer to 10 hours or more.
- Once you are familiar with your drying times and preferences you may want to try drying your fruit overnight to free up your oven during the day.
- To insure that the fruit is dry enough to prevent molding during storage, check your fruit a few days after placing it in an air tight container to see if any condensation accumulates on the sides of the container. If it does, the fruit will need to be dried more.
- If you have children in the house, you may need to camouflage your dried fruit container if you want your fruit to last longer than it took to dry it. I like to use a recycled coconut oil jar which, if I'm lucky, adds a slight coconut flavour to my fruit!

Bon appétit!