



Give Them More  
of the  
Good Stuff!

# Cucumber Basics

## Shop and Save

- ✿ The most common types of cucumbers can be found in grocery stores year round.
- ✿ Choose cucumbers that are firm and evenly colored. Avoid those with scars or soft spots.
- ✿ Cucumbers of different shapes, sizes and colors can be found in season at farmers' and specialty markets. In Oregon, this is usually July to October.

*Cucumbers belong to the same plant family as squash and melons.*

*Cucumbers are full of water, for good hydration and digestion.*



## Some Types of Cucumbers

**Slicing** – most common in grocery stores and good for eating fresh. Usually 6 to 9 inches long with thick skin.

**English** – found in some grocery stores (wrapped in plastic) and good for eating fresh. Usually 1 to 2 feet long with thin skin.

**Persian or Cocktail** – found in some stores (often wrapped or bagged) and good for eating fresh. Usually 4 to 6 inches long with thin skin.

**Pickling** – common at farmers' markets and best for fermented or canned pickles but also good for eating fresh. Usually 4 inches long with thin and knobby skin.

## Store Well Waste Less

- ✿ Cucumbers store best in a cool place (55 degrees F) in a bag with air flow. If refrigerating, keep up front to protect from over-chilling. Use within a week.
- ✿ Scrub well with a clean vegetable brush under running water just before using.
- ✿ Remove the peel if it is thick or tastes bitter.
- ✿ Tightly wrap cut cucumbers or cover with water in a closed container and refrigerate. Use within a few days.
- ✿ Make refrigerator pickles from any type of cucumber. Use within 3 months.



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# Enjoy Cucumbers

## Refrigerator Pickled Cucumbers

### Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup **vinegar** (any type)
- 1/3 cup **water**
- 1 teaspoon **salt**
- 2 to 4 teaspoons **sugar**
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons **seasonings** (see Notes)
- 1 1/2 cups **cucumber** slices

### Directions:

1. In a small saucepan, heat the vinegar, water, salt and sugar until the mixture simmers. Stir until the salt and sugar are dissolved and remove from the heat.
2. Place the seasonings in the bottom of a clean pint-sized glass jar. Add the cucumber slices, packing them closely. Leave about 1/2 inch space at the top of the jar.
3. Fill the jar with the warm vinegar mixture to cover the cucumbers. Close the jar with a clean lid and refrigerate for 1 to 3 days to allow flavors to develop.
4. Store pickles in the refrigerator. Use within 3 months.

### Notes:

- ✿ Ideas for **fresh seasonings**: basil, cilantro, dill, garlic, ginger, hot pepper, onion, oregano, thyme
- ✿ Ideas for **dry seasonings**: bay leaf, celery, cumin or dill seed, dried chile, peppercorn, pickling spice, turmeric
- ✿ Try this: 1 clove garlic, 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes and 1 teaspoon dill seed.

**Makes** 1 pint

**Prep time:** 20 minutes

**Chill time:** 1 to 3 days

Go to  
**FoodHero.org**  
for easy, tasty  
recipes with  
cucumbers

## Cucumber Yogurt Dip

### Ingredients:

- 1 small **cucumber**, peeled, seeded and finely diced or grated (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 cup nonfat or low-fat **plain Greek yogurt**
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon **garlic powder** or 1 to 2 cloves **garlic**, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon **salt**
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon **dried mint** or **dill** or 1 Tablespoon chopped **fresh mint** or **dill**
- 1/4 teaspoon **pepper** (optional)
- 1 Tablespoon **lemon juice** or **white vinegar** (optional)

### Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients together.
2. Chill in the refrigerator until serving. Taste and add more seasoning as desired.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

### Notes:

- ✿ For a chunkier dip, add more cucumber.

**Makes** 1 1/4 cup

**Prep time:** 15 minutes



When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it. Show kids how to:

- ✿ scrub cucumbers under running water.
- ✿ safely peel cucumbers using a vegetable peeler.
- ✿ measure and mix ingredients.
- ✿ arrange a plate of colorful vegetables.