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Pickle Tips and Shortcuts

- Always use the freshest cucumbers possible.
- Cut off and discard the blossom end of the cucumber-be careful not to cut into the pickle itself, just remove any remaining piece of the blossom stem.
- Choose smaller cucumbers over extra-large ones. Petite cucumbers have a higher skin-to-flesh ratio and fewer seeds.
- Do not peel cucumbers before making homemade pickles. The skin keeps them crunchy.
- Add natural tannins. Include a few grape leaves, horseradish leaves, oak leaves or black tea leaves in each jar.
- Keep the cucumbers cold before making pickles. Store the cucumbers in the refrigerator. If newly harvested, soak your whole or sliced cucumbers in a large bowl of ice water for at least one hour before adding them to the jar.
- For smaller batches and where cold storage space isn't a concern, use a refrigerator pickles recipe rather than high-heat canning.
- For convenient fermenting of vegetables, keep a 1/2-gallon jar with a brining solution on the counter. Fill jars with fresh vegetables and pour enough brine into the jar to cover the vegetables. Close the lid and allow to ferment for 3-5 days or more to your desired taste.
- Brine Calculator and Brine Percentage Chart: <https://myfermentedfoods.com/tools/brine-calculator/>

Book recommendations:

The joy of Pickling by Linda Zierich

The Art of Fermentation and Wild Fermentation by Sandor Katz

Nourishing Traditions by Sally Fallon, Mary Enig

