

# Drying Fruits and Veggies



Cut fruit into wedges (12 wedges works well because you will always know that 12 pces = a whole) or 6 - 10mm thick slices. Remove the seeds/pit and most of the core. Apples, Pears, Peaches, & Nectarines all work well.

Consistent sizes are important for even drying.

Veggies also work well. Some need to be blanched or cooked before drying.



Lay pieces close together straddling the bars in a relatively balanced fashion. Remember they are going to shrink some and you don't want them falling through.



Load up the racks to make the effort worth while. Place racks in the middle of the oven.



Set oven temperature to 140 -150 degrees F.

Prop over door open about 10cm. (Make sure you use something that won't melt or burn. Leave in oven overnight. (10 to 12 hours)

When done, they should show definite signs of having shrunk but still be somewhat pliable. When cool they will be crunchier than when still hot.

## **Hints:**

The smaller the sections are, the less time to dry.

Always start with good fresh, firm fruit. Over-ripe food does not work well.

Removing skin will speed drying but also remove ruffage. I prefer it left on.

Keep track of approximately how many pieces make a whole because it is very easy to over eat.

These directions are meant only as an introduction to drying food. Just about anything is possible.

Other things can be dried too: spaghetti sauce, onions, carrots, oranges, cooked ground beef, beef (jerky), strawberries, raspberries, kiwi, salsa, ham, cooked shrimp, cheese. Experience says don't bother dehydrating eggs, as powdered eggs are actually better, or chicken as freeze dried chicken bought from an outfitter is actually edible. Some things are better rehydrated before eating but most fruit is great just dry.

A good reference is a small book called The Lightweight Gourmet, by Alan S. Kesselheim, Published by Ragged Mountain Press, ISBN0-07-034248-2