

Prep Time	20 minutes
Cook Time	5 minutes (brine only)
Chill Time	24-48 hours minimum
Total Time	About 24 hours 25 minutes
Yield	2 quart jars (about 8-10 servings)
Difficulty	Easy
Method	No-cook / refrigerator brine
Cuisine	Amish / American
Dietary	Vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free

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Ingredients

For the Pickles

- 2 pounds small pickling cucumbers (or Kirby cucumbers), sliced ¼-inch thick
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled (optional but traditional)
- 2 teaspoons pickling salt or kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- ½ teaspoon turmeric (for color)
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional, for heat)
- 2 sprigs fresh dill (or 2 teaspoons dried dill weed)

For the Brine

- 1½ cups white vinegar (5% acidity)

- 1½ cups granulated sugar
 - ½ cup water
 - 1 tablespoon pickling spice (optional)
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Equipment

- 2 clean quart-sized glass jars with lids (Mason jars work best)
 - Medium saucepan
 - Sharp knife or mandoline
 - Cutting board
 - Measuring cups and spoons
 - Whisk or spoon
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Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Cucumbers (10 minutes, low intensity)

Wash the cucumbers thoroughly and pat them dry. Trim off both ends — this is important, as the blossom end contains enzymes that can soften pickles. Slice the cucumbers into ¼-inch rounds. If you prefer spears, quarter them lengthwise instead. Keep the slices uniform so they pickle evenly.

Intensity: Low — This is simple knife work. A mandoline speeds things up, but watch your fingers.

Step 2: Layer the Jars (5 minutes, low intensity)

In a large bowl, toss the cucumber slices with the sliced onion and salt. Let them sit for 10 minutes — this draws out excess moisture and helps them stay crisp. Meanwhile, divide the garlic, mustard seeds, celery seed, turmeric, red pepper flakes, and dill between the two jars. Pack the cucumber-onion mixture tightly into the jars, leaving about ½ inch of headspace.

Intensity: Low — Just layering and packing.

Step 3: Make the Brine (5 minutes, medium-low intensity)

In a medium saucepan, combine the vinegar, sugar, and water. Add the pickling spice if using. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves completely. Do not boil hard — just a gentle simmer. Once the sugar is dissolved, remove from heat.

Intensity: Medium-Low — Stay near the stove; sugar can scorch if left unattended.

Step 4: Pour the Brine (2 minutes, low intensity)

Carefully pour the hot brine over the cucumbers in each jar, filling to within ½ inch of the rim. Use a butter knife or chopstick to poke around the inside of the jar and release any trapped

air bubbles. Top off with more brine if needed.

Intensity: Low — Just pouring. Use a funnel if you have one.

Step 5: Cool and Seal (10 minutes, low intensity)

Let the jars sit uncovered at room temperature until they’ve cooled to warm — about 30-45 minutes. Then screw on the lids and refrigerate.

Intensity: Low — Passive waiting.

Step 6: Chill (24-48 hours, no intensity)

Refrigerate for at least 24 hours before eating. For the best flavor, wait 48 hours. The pickles will keep in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks — though they rarely last that long.

Intensity: None — The refrigerator does all the work.

Time and Intensity Overview

Stage	Time	Intensity
Prep cucumbers	10 min	Low
Layer jars	5 min	Low
Make brine	5 min	Medium-Low
Pour brine	2 min	Low
Cool and seal	10 min	Low
Chill	24-48 hrs	None
Total active time	~32 min	Easy

Tips for the Crunchiest Pickles

1. Use fresh cucumbers. The fresher, the crisper. Farmers' market cucumbers are ideal.
2. Trim the blossom end. This is the single most important step for crunch.
3. Don't skip the salt soak. It pulls out water and keeps the pickles snappy.
4. Use the right vinegar. White vinegar at 5% acidity is standard. Apple cider vinegar works but changes the color and flavor.
5. Keep them cold. These are refrigerator pickles — they must stay refrigerated at all times.
6. Let them sit. The flavor deepens dramatically after 48 hours.

Variations

- Spicy Amish Pickles: Add 1 sliced jalapeño or ½ teaspoon cayenne to each jar.
- Bread and Butter Style: Increase sugar to 2 cups and add 1 teaspoon dry mustard.

- Dill-Heavy: Double the fresh dill and add 1 teaspoon dill seed.
 - Onion Lover's: Add a second onion and use sweet Vidalia onions.
 - Low-Sugar: Replace half the sugar with a sugar substitute suitable for pickling.
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Serving Suggestions

Amish refrigerator pickles are delicious alongside:

- Burgers, hot dogs, and sandwiches
- Pulled pork and BBQ
- Potato salad and macaroni salad
- Cheese and charcuterie boards
- Fried chicken and biscuits
- Straight from the jar, cold, standing at the fridge

Storage

Store in the refrigerator in a sealed jar for up to 4 weeks. The pickles will continue to soften slightly over time. Do not leave them at room temperature for more than 2 hours. These are not shelf-stable and cannot be stored in a pantry.

Nutrition Information

Per serving (about ½ cup, based on 8 servings)

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	85 kcal
Total Fat	0.2 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Trans Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	320 mg
Total Carbohydrates	21 g
Dietary Fiber	1 g
Total Sugars	18 g
Added Sugars	17 g
Protein	1 g
Vitamin C	4 mg
Vitamin A	60 IU
Calcium	20 mg
Iron	0.4 mg
Potassium	150 mg