

- Prep Time: 25 minutes
 - Cook Time: 10 minutes
 - Chilling/Standing Time: 4 hours (minimum) – 2 weeks (for best flavor)
 - Total Time: ~4 hours 35 minutes (active time: 35 minutes)
 - Yield: 4 pint jars (about 8 cups)
 - Difficulty: Easy
 - Intensity Level: Low-Moderate (some chopping, one hot brine, no water-bath canning required for refrigerator version)
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Ingredients

For the Pickles

- 2½ lbs (about 1.1 kg) pickling cucumbers, sliced ¼-inch thick (about 8-10 cups)
- 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tbsp kosher or pickling salt (not iodized table salt)
- 2 cups ice cubes (for the salt soak)

For the Brine

- 1½ cups white vinegar (5% acidity)

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 tbsp yellow mustard seeds
- 1 tsp celery seeds
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes (optional, for a hint of heat)
- 4 dried bay leaves (1 per jar, optional)

Equipment

- Large colander
- Large non-reactive pot (stainless steel or enameled — avoid aluminum and unlined copper)
- 4 clean pint jars with lids (or 2 quart jars)

- Knife and cutting board
 - Measuring cups and spoons
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Instructions

Step 1: Salt the Cucumbers (Intensity: Low | Time: 5 minutes active, 2 hours standing)

1. Wash the cucumbers thoroughly and trim off the blossom ends (these contain enzymes that can make pickles soft).
2. Slice the cucumbers into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch rounds. Thinly slice the onion.
3. In a large bowl or colander, layer the cucumber and onion slices, sprinkling the salt between layers.
4. Toss gently to distribute the salt, then cover the surface with ice cubes.
5. Let stand at room temperature for 2 hours. The salt draws out excess water, keeping the pickles crisp. Drain well and discard any remaining ice; do not rinse (a light salt coating is desirable).

Step 2: Make the Brine (Intensity: Moderate | Time: 8-10 minutes)

1. While the cucumbers drain, combine the vinegar, white sugar, brown sugar, mustard seeds, celery seeds, turmeric, ginger, and red pepper flakes in a large non-reactive pot.
2. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally until the sugars dissolve.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 3-5 minutes until the brine is fragrant and slightly thickened. Keep hot.

Step 3: Combine and Heat (Intensity: Moderate | Time: 5 minutes)

1. Add the drained cucumbers and onions to the hot brine.
2. Return to a gentle boil over medium heat and cook for 3-4 minutes, just until the cucumbers turn a uniform olive-gold color. Do not overcook — they should remain crisp.
3. Remove from heat.

Step 4: Jar the Pickles (Intensity: Moderate | Time: 5-7 minutes)

1. Using a slotted spoon, pack the cucumbers and onions tightly into clean jars, leaving ½ inch of headspace.

- 2. Ladle the hot brine over the vegetables to cover, leaving ½ inch headspace. Tuck a bay leaf into each jar if using.
- 3. Wipe rims, seal with lids, and let cool to room temperature (about 1 hour).

Step 5: Chill and Mature (Intensity: None | Time: 4 hours minimum, ideally 1-2 weeks)

- 1. Refrigerate the jars for at least 4 hours before eating — though the flavor deepens significantly after 1-2 weeks.
- 2. Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 months. (For shelf-stable pickles, process sealed jars in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes, then cool and store in a dark, cool place for up to 1 year.)

Timing and Intensity Summary

Stage	Time	Intensity
Slicing & salting	5 min active / 2 hrs standing	Low
Brine preparation	8-10 min	Moderate
Combining & heating	5 min	Moderate
Jarring	5-7 min	Moderate
Chilling & maturing	4 hrs-2 weeks	None
Total	~35 min active / 4+ hrs total	Low-Moderate

Tips for Success

- Use fresh, firm pickling cucumbers (Kirby or Persian). Waxed supermarket cucumbers work in a pinch but may be less crisp.
- Don't skip the salt soak — it's the secret to crunchy pickles.
- Slice uniformly so the pickles cure evenly.
- Turmeric is essential — it gives bread and butter pickles their signature golden hue.
- Let them mature. The first day they're good; after two weeks they're extraordinary.

Nutrition Information (per ¼-cup serving, approx. 12 servings per pint)

- Calories: 45
- Total Fat: 0 g
- Sodium: 280 mg

- Total Carbohydrates: 11 g

- Sugars: 9 g

- Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g

- Protein: 0.3 g

- Vitamin C: 2% DV

- Calcium: 1% DV

- Iron: 1% DV