

Prep Time	25 minutes
Brine Setup Time	15 minutes
Steeping/Cooler Time	12 hours (overnight)
Total Time	12 hours 40 minutes
Yield	8 quarts
Recipe Intensity	Low (Beginner-friendly, no pressure canning)
Equipment Needed	48-qt (or larger) insulated cooler, large stockpot, 8 quart jars with lids

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Ingredients

Main Produce & Aromatics

- Kirby or Pickling Cucumbers: 12 lbs (firm, small-to-medium size)
- Fresh Dill Weed: 2 large bunches (or 16 heads of fresh dill)
- Garlic: 2 whole heads, cloves peeled and lightly smashed
- Yellow Onions: 2 medium, thinly sliced

- Mustard Seeds: 4 tablespoons
- Black Peppercorns: 2 tablespoons (whole)
- Red Pepper Flakes (Optional): 1 tablespoon (for a light kick)

Brine Solution

- Water: 1 gallon (16 cups, unchlorinated or filtered)
- Distilled White Vinegar (5% acidity): 1 gallon (16 cups)
- Canning & Pickling Salt: 1 cup (do not use iodized table salt)
- Granulated Sugar: 1/2 cup (optional, balances acidity without making them sweet)

Preparation Instructions

1. Clean and Sanitize:

- Scrub the inside of your insulated cooler with hot, soapy water, rinse thoroughly, and sanitize with a food-safe solution or boiling water. Drain completely.
- Wash 8 wide-mouth quart glass jars and lids in hot soapy water and air dry.

2. Prep the Cucumbers:

- Wash cucumbers thoroughly in cold water to remove any dirt.
- Slice off 1/16th of an inch from the blossom end of each cucumber (the blossom end contains enzymes that can make pickles soft).
- Leave whole, cut into spears, or slice into 1/4-inch coins based on preference.

3. Pack the Jars:

- Into the bottom of each quart jar, add:
 - 2-3 smashed garlic cloves
 - 2 sprigs of fresh dill (or 2 dill heads)
 - 1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds
 - 1/4 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
 - A few sliced onions
- Pack the cucumbers tightly into each jar, leaving 1/2 inch of space at the top.

- Top each jar with another sprig of dill and an additional garlic clove.

4. Prepare the Brine:

- In a large stainless steel stockpot, combine the water, white vinegar, pickling salt, and sugar.
- Bring the mixture to a rolling boil over medium-high heat, stirring until the salt and sugar dissolve completely.

5. Fill Jars and Place in Cooler:

- Carefully ladle the boiling brine into each packed jar, leaving 1/2 inch of head space.
- Wipe the rims of the jars clean with a paper towel and screw on the lids until fingertip-tight.
- Immediately place the hot, sealed jars upright into the bottom of the clean, dry cooler.

6. Add Hot Water Cushion & Seal:

- Pour boiling water into the cooler surrounding the jars until the water level reaches about two-thirds of the way up the sides of the jars. (This maintains an insulated hot environment without submerging the lids).

- Close the cooler lid tightly and leave undisturbed at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours.

7. Cool & Store:

- Remove the jars from the cooler. Wipe down the outside of the jars.
- Transfer jars to the refrigerator. Allow them to chill for at least 24 hours before eating for optimal flavor development.

Shelf Life & Storage

- Refrigerated Shelf Life: Stored in the refrigerator at or below 40°F (4°C), cooler pickles will remain crisp and fresh for up to 6 to 9 months.
- Serving: Always use clean utensils to remove pickles from the jar to prevent contamination. Keep brine covering the remaining pickles.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1 oz (approx. 2-3 spears or pickle coins)

Servings Per Recipe: ~128 servings

Nutrient	Amount per Serving	% Daily Value
Calories	7 kcal	—
Total Fat	0.1 g	0%

Nutrient	Amount per Serving	% Daily Value
Saturated Fat	0 g	0%
Sodium	310 mg	13%
Total Carbohydrates	1.5 g	1%
Dietary Fiber	0.4 g	1%
Sugars	0.8 g	—
Protein	0.3 g	1%
Vitamin C	1.2 mg	2%
Calcium	14 mg	1%
Iron	0.1 mg	1%