Prep Time: 25 minutes | Cook Time: 10 minutes | Chill Time: 24 hours | Total Time: 24 hours 35 minutes

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Introduction

If you've never made pickles at home, bread and butter pickles are the perfect place to start. This recipe transforms ordinary cucumbers into tangy, sweet, and slightly spicy pickles with a bright golden hue and a satisfying crunch. The "zesty" twist comes from a hint of red pepper flakes and a touch of turmeric, which adds both warmth and that classic yellow tint. These pickles are ideal for burgers, sandwiches, charcuterie boards, or simply eaten straight from the jar. Best of all, they require no special canning equipment — just a large pot, jars, and a little patience while they chill overnight.

Ingredients

For the Pickles:

- 2 pounds (about 1 kg) pickling cucumbers (Kirby or Persian), sliced into ¼-inch rounds
- 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt (or pickling salt)
- 2 cups (480 ml) white vinegar
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (240 ml) water
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon celery seeds
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed

- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns

Equipment:

- Large colander
- Large pot
- 3–4 sterilized glass jars with lids (about 1-quart capacity each)

Instructions

Step 1: Salt and Rest the Cucumbers (Time: 2 hours | Intensity: Low)

In a large colander set over a bowl, combine the sliced cucumbers, sliced onion, and kosher salt. Toss well to coat evenly. Let the mixture sit at room temperature for 2 hours. This step draws out excess moisture, ensuring your pickles stay crisp rather than soggy. After 2 hours, rinse the cucumbers and onions thoroughly under cold running water, then drain well and pat dry with clean towels.

Step 2: Prepare the Brine (Time: 10 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

In a large pot, combine the white vinegar, sugar, water, mustard seeds, celery seeds,

turmeric, red pepper flakes, garlic cloves, and black peppercorns. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally until the sugar dissolves completely. Once boiling, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes to let the spices bloom and infuse the brine.

Step 3: Pack the Jars (Time: 10 minutes | Intensity: Low)

While the brine simmers, tightly pack the drained cucumbers and onions into your sterilized jars. Layer them evenly, leaving about ½ inch of headspace at the top. Divide the garlic cloves and peppercorns from the brine among the jars.

Step 4: Pour the Hot Brine (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

Carefully ladle the hot brine over the cucumbers, filling each jar to within ½ inch of the rim. Make sure the spices are distributed evenly. Gently tap the jars on the counter to release any air bubbles, then wipe the rims clean and seal with lids.

Step 5: Cool and Chill (Time: 24 hours | Intensity: Low)

Let the jars cool to room temperature on the counter for about 1 hour. Then transfer them to the refrigerator and chill for at least 24 hours before eating. The pickles will continue to develop flavor over the next several days — for the best taste, wait 48 hours if you can.

Step 6: Serve and Store (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Once chilled, your zesty bread and butter pickles are ready to enjoy. Store them in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks. Always use a clean fork or spoon to remove pickles from the jar to prolong freshness.

Recipe Summary

Detail	Information
Prep Time	25 minutes
Cook Time	10 minutes
Rest Time	2 hours (salting) + 24 hours (chilling)
Total Time	Approximately 26 hours 35 minutes
Intensity Level	Low to Medium
Servings	Makes 3–4 pint jars (about 24 servings)
Difficulty	Beginner-friendly

Nutrition Information (Per Serving — about ¼ cup)

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	35 kcal
Total Fat	0 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Trans Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	180 mg
Total Carbohydrates	8 g
Dietary Fiber	0.5 g
Total Sugars	7 g
Protein	0.5 g
Vitamin C	2% DV
Calcium	1% DV
Iron	1% DV