

Out of the Pickle and into the Pickle Jar

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Introduction

Pickled cucumbers, or gherkins depending on where you live, are a delicious complement to many savory and salty meals. But before their distinctive crunch and briny acidic taste can be enjoyed, a challenge must be accepted. Most pickles are kept in glass jars in order to marinate in their brine and not take in any unwanted flavors. As a result you must first open the jar in order to be able to enjoy your sweet (or dill) pickles. Follow this guide and you should be able to open your pickle jars and savor your salty rewards.

NOTE: This procedure has only been tested to work with pickle jars, it is possible it will work for olives or other jarred vegetables/fungi/eggs, but further research is required.

Preparation

Your pickle jar may need to be unpacked. If your jar came in a pack of multiple jars you will need to separate it from the other jars. If applicable, remove any plastic lining around the lid and top of the jar before trying to open the jar. This lining will be easiest to take off with scissors.

Traditional Opening Technique

Supplies:

- Clean and Dry Hands
- Grip Strength
- Determination
- Unopened Pickle Jar

Approach:

The standard way to open a pickle jar won't require any special supplies that you shouldn't already have access to. As noted above, be sure to clean your hands and dry them well, as wet hands will slip over the lid and make it harder to open. You stand a good chance of opening the jar with your own hands and determination.

Procedure:

1. Hold the jar, with the lid pointed upwards, in your dominant hand about 6 inches from your sternum (this is the boney center of your rib cage) in front of you.
 - a. This hand should be gripping the middle of the glass, with your fingers wrapped around the curved sides.
 - b. Your arm should be positioned such that your forearm is parallel with the ground and your elbow is further from your chest than your wrist.
2. Hold the lid with your nondominant hand, placing your palm across the top of the lid.
 - a. Your fingers on this hand should grip the rim of the lid and not touch the jar.

- b. This arm should mirror your other arm, such that if you look down your arms should form an uppercase "M" with the jar being positioned at the point where the arches meet.
3. Making sure to maintain a strong grip of the jar and lid, twist counter-clockwise on the lid and twist clockwise on the jar at the same time.
4. (If the lid the lid does not twist away, proceed to next section)
5. Once the jar and lid begin to twist away from each other, lift your nondominant hand off the cap, then reposition your arms into the previous "M" shape. Place your nondominant hand back on the lid and grip as before.
6. Repeat Steps 3 and 4 until the lid is completely loose.
7. Lift the lid up and away from the jar.

Get a Grip

Supplies:

- Rubber band that can form a two inch circle when unstretched
- Rubber gloves that fit your hands and preferably have a rough and non-slippery surface
- Towel, preferable a hand towel for manageability
- 12 inches of unused duct tape

Approach:

So you tried out the traditional method and your hands are now sore and in pain, the jar still unopen. If we increase the friction, or the amount of grip that we get on the lid and jar, more of the power that we use for twisting will go towards actually turning the lid, preventing your hands from slipping. For this guide we will be applying a variety of grips to your jar; use as many of them as you can for the best possible grip.

Procedure:

1. Place the jar on a flat surface, lid side up.
2. Wrap all 12 inches of duct tape around the rim of the lid.
 - a. Make sure that the duct tape does not also stick to the jar
 - b. Don't worry about having to layer the duct tape on top of itself.
3. Wear the rubber gloves on your hands.
4. Stretch the rubber band over the entire length of the perimeter of the lid in one layer.
5. Place the towel over the lid to act as a buffer between your hands and the rubberband.
6. Retry the traditional opening procedure with these enhancements.

Fresh Until Seal is Broken

Supplies:

- Steak Knife, Spoon, or Bottle Opener
- Hot Water

Approach:

The main difficulty is the vacuum of air within the jar that makes it hard to open the jar. This is due to pressure, a force that pulls the cap closed tighter. If we break the seal on the jar we can release the pressure and decrease the needed strength to open the jar. If

this is the first time you are opening the seal of the jar you know that you've succeeded when the air-bump in the center of the top of the lid deflates and you hear either a light pop or a hiss of air escaping out of the jar.

Procedure:

1. Run hot water on top of the seam between lid and jar.
2. Pry open the side of the jar with your utensil.
 - a. Stick the point of your utensil in the seam between the lid and jar.
 - b. Carefully apply force with your hand moving towards the jar and the point of the utensil traveling away from the jar, into the lip of the lid. Continue until you hear the hiss or pop of the seal breaking.
3. Retry traditional procedure.

Final Resort

WARNING:

This method has a high potential of inflicting cut wounds that will be immediately filled with pickle brine. Due to the acidity of vinegar brines the resulting injuries will be *very* painful.

Supplies:

- Sink
- Fork
- Bowl
- Built-Up Frustration
- Hammer

Approach:

You now have a wet, scratched, duct tape and rubber covered pickle jar. When matters become this dire sometimes it may be necessary to think outside of the jar.

Procedure:

1. Place the jar on its curved side in the sink.
2. Grip the handle of the hammer in your dominant hand.
3. Strike the glass of the jar around 1'-2' above the jar onto the large glass face with the metal head of the hammer.
 - a. Your blow should follow through the jar but not all the way down to the bottom of the sink.
4. Use the fork's prongs to carefully pierce the surface of a pickle and pick it out of the sink.
5. Rinse the pickle under running water to wash off all glass shards stuck to the pickles.
6. Place your cleaned pickles into the upward-facing bowl, placed outside of the sink.

Considerations

If you were able to retrieve your pickles with the jar intact, do not close the lid too tightly when resealing the jar. Depending on your level of struggle, you may want to buy relish next time. You

could also spend some time at the gym to make friends who look like they might be able to help you open your pickle jars.