

DRIED MEATS (JERKY)

Basic Beef Jerky

2 lb lean beef, trimmed of all visible fat, cut into 1"-wide, 1/8"-thick strips with the grain of the muscle when possible.

The easiest way to make jerky is to buy your own food dryer. Place beef strips on the racks of a home food dryer (available at many large discount stores) and dry the meat until it is tough and chewy (usually overnight). Alternatively, dry in your oven on ungreased cookie sheets. Set oven at lowest baking temperature and keep the door propped open. Maintain the temperature between 140 and 150 degrees. Drying time varies among ovens, but typically takes from 4-12 hours. The jerky is done when it is chewy and tough.

Spicy Beef Jerky

2 lb lean-beef, trimmed of all visible fat, cut into 1"-wide, 1/8"-thick strips. (Almost any meat can be dried; try lean pork, venison, buffalo, even poultry and fish.) Follow instructions for drying.

chili powder
garlic powder
onion powder
white pepper

lemon pepper
turmeric
curry powder
cayenne pepper

cumin
coarse ground black pepper
dry mustard

Mix any and all combinations of the spices listed above in a medium-sized bowl to make a dry rub. Let your persona taste and imagination guide you, varying the amount of each ingredient according to preference. Our favorite is equal amounts of cumin, garlic powder, coarse ground black pepper, turmeric and cayenne pepper. Dip each meat strip in the bowl of spices. Lightly coat and then marinate the meat overnight in a covered bowl in the refrigerator. Then prepare jerky using the method in above recipe.

Dried Salmon

2 lb salmon filets cut into 1/2"- to 1"-wide, 1/8"-thick strips. Include the skin and try to use wild rather than farmed salmon. Wild salmon tastes much better.

Dry the salmon strips using the same method as with the beef jerky. Again, the easiest way is to use your own food dryer. Place the salmon strips on the racks of a home food dryer, and dry the meat until it is not hard, but just a little chewy. The oven-baking method also works.