

Freezing Cantaloupes, Honeydew, Watermelons and Other Melons: Easy, Fully Illustrated Step-by-Step Directions and Recipe to Make Home Frozen Melon Balls!

Cantaloupes, watermelons, honeydews, and other melons are easy to freeze. You've probably seen them in the grocery store's freezer case or had them in a restaurant.

Here's how to do freeze the melons, with or without sugar!

Ingredients

- **Melons:** fresh Cantaloupe, Crenshaw, Honeydew, Watermelon, etc.
- Sugar (optional - but it does help retain color and flavor better and longer)
- Water

Equipment

- Ice cream scoop - if you want to make melon balls
- Knife
- Freezer containers or freezer bags
- Freezer

Step by Step Directions

Step 1 - Choose and prepare your cantaloupes

Cantaloupes should be selected as fully ripe (but not overripe) fruit. This is accomplished by selecting fruit by looking for

1. stem separation from the fruit;
2. thick, coarse and corky netting or veining which stands out on the surface;
and
3. yellowish-buff, yellowish-gray, or pale yellow skin color between the netting.

4. A ripe cantaloupe will also have a pleasant cantaloupe odor when the stem scar is held under the nose.
5. The stem scar will also yield slightly to light pressure.

Avoid cantaloupes and melons that appear to be overripe. The indicators of overripeness are: a pronounced yellow rind color, softening over the entire rind, and soft, watery and soft, mushy flesh.

Cantaloupe pieces need to be syrup packed but do not need to be treated to prevent discoloration. The procedures to freeze cantaloupe are outlined below.

Step 3 - Prepare the syrup

You will need a cold 30 percent sugar syrup. You can use some honey instead - see the footnotes. To make the syrup, dissolve sugar in lukewarm water, mixing until the solution is clear. Chill the syrup before using. Here are syrups to freeze melons:

Type of Syrup	Percent Syrup	Cups of Sugar*	Cups of Water	Yield of Syrup in Cups
Very Light	10%	1/2	4	4 1/2 cups
Light	20%	1	4	4 3/4 cups
Medium	30%	1 3/4	4	5 cups
Heavy	40%	2 3/4	4	5 1/3 cups
Very Heavy	50%	4	4	6 cups

* In general, up to one-fourth of the sugar may be replaced by corn syrup or mild-flavored honey. A larger proportion of corn syrup may be used if a very bland, light-colored typed is selected.

Step 3 - Cut up the melons

Cut the melons in half, remove seeds and rind. Cut melons into slices, cubes or balls. An ice cream scoop is great for making balls.

Step 4 - Fill containers

Pack into containers and cover with syrup. If you are not using syrup, just fill the containers!

Step 5 - Add the Syrup (Optional, but recommended)

Use just enough cold syrup to cover the prepared fruit after it has been placed in the container (about 1/2 to 2/3 cup of syrup per pint). To keep fruit under the syrup, place a small piece of crumpled parchment paper or other water-resistant wrapping material on top, and press fruit down into the syrup before sealing the container, or use ziploc freezer bags, so you can squeeze out air and seal.

Step 6 - Seal and freeze

Seal the containers (leave some empty headspace IF you are using rigid containers that could break). If you are using a vacuum sealer (which works great) freeze the bags unsealed (but obviously upright) then seal them after they have frozen overnight..

Step 7 - Label the bags or containers!

"Sharpie" marking pens work well on plastic and won't rub off.

Step 8 - Done!

Pop them into the freezer, on the quick freeze shelf, if you have one!

Later, when you are ready to serve the corn, just thaw them in the fridge!