

How and Why to Soak and Dehydrate Nuts and Seeds

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1. Put 4 cups of any raw, organic nut or seed in a half gallon mason jar. Add 1 tablespoon of sea salt. Fill with water to the top of the jar. Swirl the water around to dissolve the salt. (The salt is for taste and has no effect on whether the enzymes become available or not.)
2. Let the nuts/seeds sit in the jar sit overnight, or for at least 7 hours.
3. Drain the nuts/seeds. Rinsing is optional. Using a sprout screen with metal band really makes this easy. Remove skins, if desired.
4. Spread the nuts/seeds in a single layer on a dehydrator tray. Dry at 95 to 100 degrees F until crispy. Check by taste – are they crunchy and free of moisture? This usually takes about 24 hours, depending on dehydrator and other conditions, etc.

If you don't have a dehydrator, you can use the sun during sunny months. Set out a tray full of soaked nuts/seeds in sunlight. Keep it covered with a light cloth to keep out dust and bugs. Using an oven above 115 degrees F is a second-choice solution because it will kill the enzymes present in the nuts/seeds. (However, you will have nuts/seeds free of enzyme inhibitors due to the soaking and the cooking.)

Uses for Soaked and Dehydrated Nuts and Seeds

Anywhere you would use nuts, use these!

- Use them chopped in all recipes that call for nuts – but remember that if it is a cooked recipe, you'll lose the enzyme benefit from the heat of cooking.
- Grind them into nut and seed butters.
- Snack on them – mix them with dried fruits for a trail mix.
- Add them into raw nut and fruit snacks.
- Eating raw, soaked and dehydrated nuts/seeds with a meal provides digestive enzymes to help the body digest that meal: sprinkle them chopped on a salad; sprinkle on your morning (soaked) porridge; or eat a couple of whole nuts alongside any meal.

I keep quart size jars full of various nuts and seeds ready to go in my pantry cupboard.

Is a Dehydrator Really Necessary?

Yes, and no. You can always soak your nuts and use them that way. Being able to dehydrate them returns them to the crispy state that is called for in most recipes. So, a dehydrator of some sort is essential if you want your nuts/seeds crispy while keeping the enzyme benefits of raw, germinated nuts. (But remember if you use the raw, germinated nuts in a cooked recipe, the enzymes will perish from the heat of cooking.) You can get around having a dehydrator if you live in a sunny area where you can dry nuts/seeds outdoors year round or can build a solar dehydrator.