

Oh Yes You CAN !

Storage Tips for your Canned Goods.

We have all probably seen storage of canned goods on various prepper shows and websites showing what appears to be the vegetable aisle at Publix.

Row upon row of cans, neatly lined up, as far as you can see.



The reality is that the 'normal' prepper has neither the budget nor the room for this type of stockpiling. Instead, we pack the pantry and line some shelves in the basement. Due to the humidity, we have to rotate these stocks or the cans begin to rust, bulge and otherwise become deadly poison bombs, just waiting for some unsuspecting human to open and eat.

Here is a quick and simple solution to this problem that presents some opportunities as well.

First: What are you keeping in cans?

The only canned goods that should really be considered for long term prepping are items with high calorie content, high protein content, and low water content. Even if you had an inexhaustible supply of canned peas, it is doubtful that you could live very long on a diet of just peas, and let's face it, who would want to?

The reason to keep low water content is simple. If the power goes off in the winter, your cans may freeze. If you have to leave your home in an emergency, and travel elsewhere to stay with family or friends, your cans may freeze, even in the car. Items with low water content will not expand as much, so there is less chance of damaging the can. I suggest you try it yourself on foods you wish to keep

awhile. Put a can of peas and a can of kidney beans in the freezer overnight. Take them out the next day. Study the results.

So, while freezing and calorie content are important things to consider, humidity and heat are the killers. Keep your cans in a location where the temperature does not fluctuate much. Generally, this is in a garage, basement, or storage unit. Here your number one enemy is humidity.

Fortunately there is a simple and fun way to fight the effect of humidity on your canned goods. (Kids love to help with this...)

And the secret ingredient is – Candles !



Everyone has old candles kicking around, put them to good use!

This can be done in two ways. Decide ahead of time which way you will approach this.

1. For indoor use on an electric stovetop (not a gas range), use an old kitchen pot.
2. For use on an outdoor BBQ grill, a woodstove, or a gas range, you can use a metal coffee can.

Place your candles in the pot or can, and place it over a medium heat. They will take awhile to melt, depending on the heat setting. You are not after a fast melt, just a slow one to bring the wax just over

the melting point. Add enough old candles (any color) to bring the can or pot to about 2-3 inches of wax in it.

Using an old fork or piece of wire, fish out the candle strings. It won't hurt to leave them in, but they will tend to get in the way.

When you are done, you should have a nice liquid container of wax.



Next, take your can and by grasping the top edge, dip the can into the hot wax, swirling it slightly. A few seconds are more than enough.



Take the can out and hold it over the can or pot until the wax stops dripping off. Grab the now waxed end of the can and repeat the process with the remaining half.

As you can see , the answer is no. Wax is not getting onto the sides of the can. This is not critical if you plan on storing for only a few years, you can see that the wax has sealed the edges of the label, as well as over the paper, so there is still a complete barrier to humidity.

If your needs are for longer term storage, or absolutely foolproof storage, proceed this way.

Remove the label from the can before dipping. Using a permanent marker, transfer the contents to the top and sides of the can.



Dip as usual and the entire can will be protected. The marker is still visible through the wax. This technique has an added advantage , should someone break in, or come to confiscate your food storage, unlabeled items are not likely to be trusted, especially when you label them **'dog food'**, or **'ground prunes'**....

Store your newly minted cans in something to minimize temperature change, and provide easy carrying. Cans are notoriously heavy, so try not to overdo it. You might try building dedicated crates for these to make handling and storage easier, (see previous article on making storage options).

So proceed to turn this –

To This -



As an added benefit, the wax applied to these cans can be easily reclaimed in a survival situation. Wax has many uses, and waterproofing will be a big one in a disaster.

Simply drop the can in hot water. The wax will melt off and float on the surface. Skim it off and place in a container. A piece of string is all that is then required to create a candle again.



So we go full circle.

From a candle, to wax humidity protection, back to a candle.

A completely recycled option, and in my book, that's called a ***win-win***.