



## How to make bacon from scratch

by [smooooth](#) on August 24, 2012

### Intro: How to make bacon from scratch

I've been smoking meats, ribs salt, nuts etc for about a year and a half. Pretty intently. This is my first post about it. I've gotten pretty good at it. By no means am I an expert, nor will I tell anyone that. I enjoy the art of smoking and love the taste. There is almost always room for improvement. I have a notebook I keep all my notes so that when I find it to be perfect for my taste, I will stick with that. I kept telling everyone one of these days I'm going to make my own bacon. Quite a bit of what I've learned as been on here. I printed out a post about how to do this. Honestly, before this I had no idea bacon was made from pork bellies. I needed a few things first. First step was that I needed the pink cure salt. Then I purchased a 5 gallon food grade bucket with a good lid. Although stores give these away, I didn't want to screw around with hoping I get one. Finally I purchased a high end home meat slicer. I really wanted a commercial one but I can't justify the cost right now. Maybe if I need it enough, I will spend the large chunk on it.

We have a very large Oriental (somewhat international) store here called Lee Lee's and they have pork bellies for \$3.19 a lb which seems pretty good. I wanted it to be worth it, so I purchased quite a bit. The pork bellies were not thick like I wanted, so I only purchased one of those. However the pork bellies with ribs attached were much thicker. I decided to buy 2 of them. I've not experienced in trimming meat, but I figured it can't be extremely difficult. All include the pork skin.



### Step 1: Cure

Next I make up a basic cure recipe. It is mixed until it is a clear brownish liquid. I made 2 gallons worth of cure mixture.

real simple curing brine:

for every 1 gallon of water, add:

1/3 - 1 cup sea salt (depending if you're on a lo-salt diet)

1 cup granulated sugar or Splenda®

1 cup brown sugar or Splenda® brown sugar mix

1 tbsp cure no. 1 pink salt



**Step 2: Thickness**

You can see that thicker is better... at least for bacon.



### Step 3: Trim

Next was to work on the pork bellies with the ribs. It was a little more difficult than I thought but not all that bad. Since the bones are harder to see, I had to cut a little at a time while feeling where the bones were.



### Step 4: Bones

I saved the bones for later smoking and packaged them in food saver bags and in the freezer they go. Hey, I'm not stupid! No point in wasting good food. After the ribs are remove, they aren't too bad looking. I like them much better.



### Step 5: Put pork bellies in cure

Into the cure it all goes. Covered with a gallon size Ziploc bag partially filled with water to keep everything submerged. This has to cure for 10 days



### Step 6: Label label label

I have a small Brother label printer so to be safe I printed out 2 labels. First with the date I started the cure and the other with the completion date, attached the lid tightly and placed in my garage fridge. At this point I'm like a little kid at the entrance of a new a candy store, just waiting for it to be opened.

After 10 days, I removed the bucket and wallah!



### Step 7: Using spices to make a rub

The next step was to give them a good rinse so that there is no cure mixture left on them. I did all this piece by piece. Once rinsed, I sprinkled course ground pepper, onion powder and granulated garlic over all sides except the pork skin. The pork skin will stay on the entire smoking process.



### Step 8: Wrap it

The curing was done on a Wednesday and can't be smoked until I have time on the weekend. So I wrapped all of it in saran wrap and placed in the fridge.



### Step 9: Ready for smoke

On the day of the smoke, I unwrapped them all and now it was just time to wait for the smoke to take its course.



### Step 10: BACON!!!

Now the original instructions were to smoke for 10 hours on 100 degrees. Smoked with hickory wood chips. I have an electric smoker. Started at 100 degrees and couldn't draw any smoke. I figured this wasn't going to work. I played around alot with it until I got a small amount of smoke rolling, somewhere between 115-125 degrees. I now understand why bacon gets smoked for 10 hours.

After smoking was complete I placed all on plates wrapped in saran wrap and placed these in the freezer overnite. The next evening I sliced all the bellies into bacon (of course I removed the rind before I put this in the fridge, It comes off much easier.. I love eating deep fried bacon and the only way it turns out well is to slice it thin. So I did just that. (a meat slicer makes life much easier)



### Step 11: Frying time

I have a decent size pile of bit and ends. I separated all of these into 12oz size packages (since that's the weight of most store bought bacon is) and used my food saver and froze all but 1 package.

The next day I figured it was time to fry up some delicious homemade bacon. The bacon did not render any grease while cooking. None of it did. I naturally assume that due to a higher smoke temp it the cause of that. I used some olive oil to prevent it from burning. Regardless of grease, the bacon taste amazing. I doubt I will ever buy any ever again, I'm going to continue making my own.

