1. Read up on canning at the National Center for Home Food Preservation or at https://www.freshpreserving.com/canning-101
2. Select canning pot that is large and tall enough to hold your jars on a rack with an inch or more of water above them. It can be aluminum, stainless steel or graniteware. If you have a smooth top range or electric burners, be sure the pot has a smooth bottom. It should also not be more than 2 inches wider than the burners on either side.
3. Collect all supplies including canning rack, jars, lids, rings, small spatula or chopstick, tongs, jar lifter, ladle, canning funnel, clean cloth or paper towel to clean jar rims, clean cloth or cake rack for hot jars, kettle or small pot for additional boiling water.
4. With rack in pot, fill half or more full of water and begin heating. Place clean jars in rack with an inch of water above to sterilize jars for 10 minutes at a steady boil.
5. Prepare all ingredients for your recipe that has been tested and approved for canning. Cook for time stated for hot pack.
6. With jar lifter, set jars on cooling rack or clean towel in a spot where you can add the prepared food to your jars. Have your funnel, ladle and chopstick or thin spatula ready along with lids and rings (which now only need to be thoroughly washed in hot water with soap).
7. Keep canner water at a simmer.
8. When food is ready, hot pack the jars with your recipe.
9. Leave appropriate headspace indicated in recipe.
10. Run spatula or chopstick down insides of jars to remove any air bubbles
11. Clean rims of jars with a clean paper or cloth towel. Moisten with hot water from your canner or a bit of vinegar if it’s sticky.
12. Add lids and then rings making them “finger-tight.” Do not over tighten!
13. Use the jar lifter to place each jar into the water bath one at a time, keeping upright.
14. If water doesn’t cover jars by at least an inch, add boiling water. Pour it into the pot, not onto the jars.
15. Cover pot and turn up heat until water is vigorously boiling.
16. After water comes to a boil, set timer for correct processing time.
17. Keep covered. Lower heat but maintain gentle boil.
18. If water stops boiling, increase heat and begin processing time over again once it’s boiling.
19. Add more boiling water if needed.
20. When timer goes off, turn off heat and remove lid. Set the timer for another 5 minutes for processing to finish.
21. Remove jars one at a time with jar lifter and place on clean cloth or cooling rack. Keep jars separated by at least an inch. Be careful jars do not tilt at any time. Don’t set jars on a cold counter or surface or where there is a cold draft.
22. Don’t touch jars as they sit undisturbed for 12 to 24 hours. Don’t touch or tighten the rings or press on the lids until jars have completely cooled.
23. You may hear a pinging sound as jars seal. Still, don’t touch them or move them.
24. After jars have cooled, you can remove the rings. Lift each jar by the edge of the lid to make sure seal is tight.
25. If any jars aren’t sealed, put them in the refrigerator and plan to use the contents within a reasonable time frame.
26. Wash jars and lids gently to remove any stickiness.
27. Label jars and store out of direct sunlight in a cool, dry place.