How to Seal Mylar Bags (Quart or Gallon size)

1. Plan

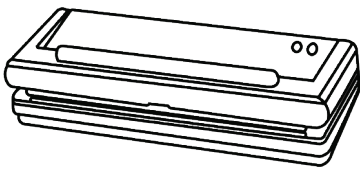
First, read over the directions and make some decisions about the best way for you to complete the sealing process:

What size oxygen absorbers do I need?

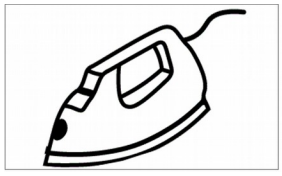
Visit here to learn all about how to determine the appropriate absorber size according to the air volume of your filled container. If you are using a Mylar Set from PackFreshUSA, then the Oxygen Absorber / Mylar bag combination will include an Oxygen Absorber that has a large enough capacity for any food type and you can skip this step.

How do I Heat Seal the Mylar Bags?

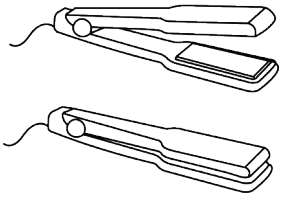
You will need to choose a heat-sealing method for the Mylar bags. Mylar bags must be heat-sealed to be effective. (some have ziplocks for a temporary convenience but they still need heat-sealing for long-term storage)



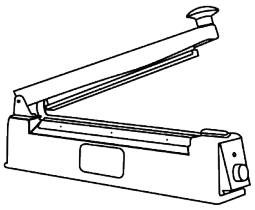
Vacuum Sealer



Household Iron



Hair-straightening Iron



Impulse Sealer

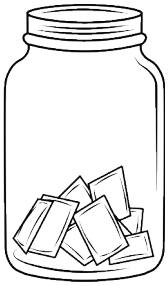
Vacuum Sealer - If you have a vacuum sealer, that is a very easy way to seal the smaller gallon or quart bags. (Turn the pump off and just use the sealing feature)

Iron - A hair-straightening iron or household iron are favorite ways to seal the larger bags. (and the smaller bags too) It is much easier than ironing a shirt: one or two passes with the iron creates a great seal and is perfectly safe for the iron and the bag.

Impulse Sealer - They make impulse sealers for commercial sealing but they are expensive and these ways are very simple.

How Do I Save Any Unused Oxygen Absorbers

You will need to have a plan for any unused Oxygen Absorbers. A mason jar is often the best choice. You can also reseal the bag they come in, vacuum seal them, or use a jar like a peanut butter jar, but it must be closed very tightly. If your jar is big, it is a good idea to use something like marbles (or anything that fits) to take up the empty space.



PackFreshUSA sets come with Oxygen Absorber 10-packs, so if you pack in groups of 10, you won't have to worry about this.

2. Assemble Your Materials

Select a clean working area and gather the things you will need.

Checklist:

___ Food to store (here is a list and info on appropriate food types)

___ Mylar bags

___ Oxygen absorbers

___ Permanent marker

___ Household iron, hair-straightening iron, vacuum sealer, or impulse sealer

___ Storage bin, box or bucket you can use to hold the bags in an upright position

___ Mason jar or another way to store unused Oxygen Absorbers

___ Small 2 x 4 or block, with a towel to use as and ironing board (with household iron only)

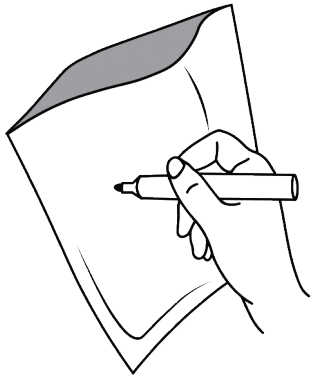
___ Small pitcher or scoop (optional)

___ Funnel (optional)

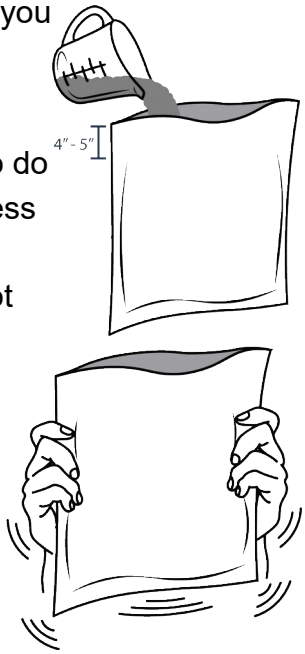
3. Create an assembly line

You need to limit the amount of time the Oxygen Absorbers are exposed to the air, so in this step you will get everything filled and lined up, ready to drop an Oxygen Absorber into each bag.

Before you fill each bag, use your permanent marker to write the product name, date, and any other information that may be useful. Don't forget to include prep directions if necessary.



Fill each bag using a scoop or funnel if you like. It may seem like you can just pour from the original package – and sometimes you can – but there is potential for a huge mess too, so you've been warned :)



Packing the food as tightly as possible reduces the air volume. To do this, pour a few cups of the product in the bag, shake the bag and/or press down on the product to remove any air pockets and maximize density. Continue doing this until you are about 4 or 5 inches from the top. Do not over fill the bags because you will need plenty of sealing room.

Your storage bins or boxes will help keep the bags orderly and from spilling over.

4. Add Oxygen Absorbers

Now you are going to confirm the freshness of the Oxygen Absorbers and add them to the bags.

Because oxygen removal is an invisible process, many people have unnecessary doubts and are quick to worry about their Oxygen Absorbers, but you can have 100% confidence by following these steps.

You should always confirm the freshness of your Oxygen Absorbers, but the chance of there being an exposed Oxygen Absorber in a vacuum sealed package from a reputable retailer is virtually zero. We have **never** seen one in an undamaged package and there is nothing about them that “fails”. (You can read more about the process here) Still, the freshness confirmation is very important for peace of mind, which is what Long-term Food Storage is all about.

It takes about 2 hours in the open air for an Oxygen Absorber to become fully exposed, but you should try to get your sealing done in 10 minutes to insure they will absorb the full amount they are rated for. If it's going to take longer due to the quantity of bags you are sealing, break up the sealing task into portions. Our Mylar sets all have Oxygen Absorber 10-packs so that you can easily do 10 bags at a time. Do not let the Oxygen Absorbers be exposed for over 20 minutes. PackfreshUSA Oxygen Absorbers have a significant safety buffer and will absorb 180 to 300% of their rating, but it's best to keep that in reserve.

Before you open the Oxygen Absorber package:

1. Your Oxygen Absorber package should be vacuum sealed. Air could not have entered the package if it is undamaged and under vacuum.

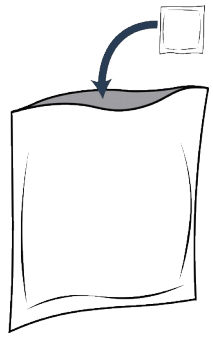
2. The oxygen indicator should be a shade of pink or red, not dark blue. Pink is the typical

color, but some are more of a brown or red – and that is fine – the indicator will turn dark blue when oxygen is present. The indicator was dark blue when the package was sealed, so the pink shades are a positive confirmation that the Oxygen Absorbers work and have removed the oxygen from the package.

After you open the package...

3. The Oxygen Absorber should feel soft, like it contains powder. When an Oxygen Absorber becomes fully exposed, it feels hard and crunchy. It will either feel like it contains a solid wafer or it will rattle when shaken. If you ever get the chance, leave one out in the open overnight to feel the difference.

You can now feel confident that, with a good seal, your food will be protected.



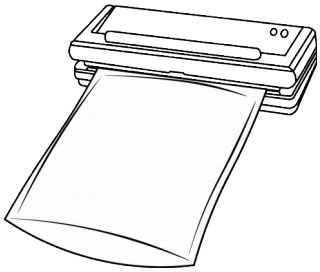
Place the Oxygen Absorbers in each of the bags,

in a central location, in with the food. When each bag has an Oxygen Absorber in it, place any unused Oxygen Absorbers in the mason jar or other container you have for unused Oxygen Absorbers.

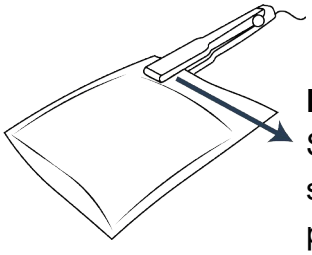
It is normal for the Oxygen Absorbers to feel warm while they work; it is also normal not to notice this.

5. Heat Seal the Bags

This is where you will use your chosen sealing method to seal the bags. For each method, try to insure the product is packed tightly and pull the sides of the Mylar bag taut so that you have a flat flap at the top and minimal air inside the bag. Be careful as both iron methods will make the bag quite hot!

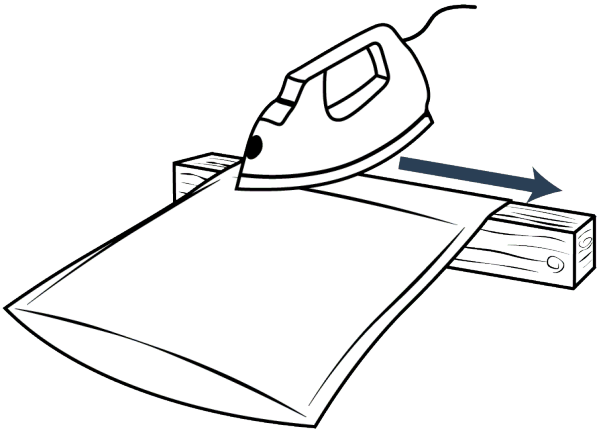


Vacuum sealer – turn the pump off and just use the sealing feature.



Hair-straightening iron – The iron should be on the highest setting. Start at one side of the bag, clamping the iron down for about 2 seconds (longer if needed) and repeat, slightly overlapping the sealed parts as you work your way across the top, permanently joining the front and back of the bag. You want the seal to be as close to the food as possible.

Household iron - The iron should be on the cotton setting. (400 º) A 2 x 4 with a towel wrapped around it, or similar object placed on your counter or table, can give you an elevated platform to iron on. Keep the bag on the table and place the top flap over the 2 x 4. Start at one side of the bag and iron a wide strip for about 2 seconds, (longer if needed) permanently joining the front and back of the bag. You want the seal to be as close to the food as possible.



6. Follow-up and storage

Inspect the seals you have made and confirm the bags are completely sealed.

Most of the oxygen will be gone from the bags in 6 to 12 hours. You will likely notice a vacuum-packed look to the bags the following day, but if you don't, do not worry. As long as you confirmed the freshness of the Oxygen Absorbers and the bags are properly sealed, the process **did** work. There is only a 20% reduction in air volume due to the oxygen being absorbed and that is not always noticeable. Read more about this here [link to myths and misconceptions]

Your food is very well protected, and safe to store just about anywhere, but the ideal location is cool, dark and dry. It is also always prudent to store all food 6 inches off of the ground. Some people choose to keep their small bags inside a 5 gallon bucket or plastic storage bin to give them additional protection from critters and falling debris. Mylar bags and oxygen absorbers can give you 25 years or more of protection, but it is best to rotate your food supply annually by actually using it.

It is vital that you have complete confidence in your food storage so if you have any questions or concerns please take advantage of our 5 Star Service at:

5StarService@absorboxygen.com