Sealing Mylar Food Storage Bags ~ The Long-Term Food Storage Solution

No special tools are required - you can use a standard clothes iron. Bulk dry foods such as rice, pasta, and beans can be purchased at big-box stores, restaurant suppliers, or other bulk food retailers. Simply repackage the food using your Mylar bags and oxygen absorbers. Plastic bags, including the plastic materials used in vacuum sealing machines, are not adequate for long-term food storage, and the temperatures are not high enough in the vacuum sealers to adequately seal Mylar. Thick plastic food-grade buckets are not enough either, as they do not stop the infiltration of oxygen and moisture. Mylar bags, used along with food-grade buckets or other container for protection and support, are the answer. Mylar is not puncture proof – nor rodent proof – thus the added element of a bucket or other container, which also makes them easier to move and store.

There are four main enemies to defeat when it comes to long-term food storage:

- Oxygen
- Moisture
- Light
- Contamination

Mylar bags are effective against all four. An airtight seal is the key. Heat-sealing of the Mylar bag is essential to create a permanent oxygen, moisture, and bacteria barrier. The downside of Mylar is that improper packing, sealing, or handling can result in tears. As with any storage container, even a small pin-hole will defeat the protective barrier.

Follow these 6 simple steps-

Items needed:

1. **Mylar bags**
2. **Oxygen Absorbers**
3. **Small Jar with tight lid (to store Absorbers between bag fills)**
4. **Clothing Iron**
5. **Carpenter's Level or Straight Edge (such as a length of 2x4)**
6. **Permanent marker for labeling (optional: clear packing tape)**
7. **Large Measuring Cup**
8. **Storage Container. (Lidded plastic food-grade bucket, steel drum, etc.)**

Step #1: Label

Use a permanent marker to label the bag. Include the contents, quantity, number of oxygen absorbers and date packaged, and instructions to prepare the contents if necessary. You may also want to use clear packing tape to protect the ink from damage. If packaging a large quantity of bags, you may want to create a pre-printed label then adhere with clear tape.

Step #2: Fill the Bag

Scoop the food into the bag with the measuring cup. You may also use a scale to weigh the contents, but this is not necessary if you label the bag according to number of cups.

Food should be removed from the manufacturer's packaging before being placed in a Mylar bag. Do not use the manufacturer's packaging unless it is necessary to protect the Mylar bag from the sharp edges of the food. In these situations, make sure that the manufacturer's wrap is thoroughly punctured. This makes it possible for the oxygen absorber to work on the food contained in the package.

Leave at least 3-4 inches of headspace for sealing. If the bag is too large for your desired storage amount, it can be cut into smaller sizes. The edges would then need to be sealed to create a bag.

We sell ½ and 1 gallon size Mylar Food Storage Bags for most convenient uses.

Shake the bag to settle the contents.

Step #3: Add Oxygen Absorbers

Use the proper size oxygen absorber packet for the air volume of the Mylar bag. Since your emergency food supply is so important and these packets are so inexpensive, it's a good idea to add an extra packet to each bag.

Keep your absorbers fresh by storing them in a small jar with a tight lid. Don't remove absorbers from the jar until you are ready to use them, and be sure to re-cap the jar immediately. It is important to remove only the oxygen absorbers you need for the bag you are about to seal. Oxygen absorbers start working as soon as they are exposed to air, so take care to keep them fresh. Your food storage efforts will be wasted if you allow your oxygen absorbers to get to work before they are sealed into your food ba

Fold over the excess Mylar then move the bag to your level sealing surface.

Step #4: Seal the Bag

A standard household clothes iron can be used to seal your Mylar bags. Practice before starting to seal bags filled with food. A high heat setting will likely work best, but take the time to experiment with different settings on your iron. If the iron starts sticking to the Mylar bag, your heat setting is too high. Find the optimal heat setting; one which provides a smooth, secure seal to the bag.

Be sure to turn-off the iron's steam feature, as steam will add damaging moisture to your food.

Use the edge of the Carpenter's level or straight edge under the bag while sealing. Move the hot iron back and forth along the edge to be sealed. If you hold it in one place too long, you may actually melt the bag.

It is not necessary to remove all the air from the bag, but your oxygen absorber packet will be more effective if you remove excess air before you finish sealing the bag. The easiest way to remove air from the bag is to seal all but the last couple of inches, and then press the air out of the bag before sealing the remaining inches.

After you have finished sealing the bag, take the time to closely inspect the seal and the bag itself. If the seal does not look reasonably smooth, run the iron over it again. If the seal is bunched or deformed, cut the bag open and start over. Look for pinholes and damage to the bag, too. If the bag has been damaged, it's better to waste the bag than to store food which may spoil.

Set your sealed Mylar bags aside for inspection after 2-3 days before placing in containers.

Step #5: Inspect the Seal

After 2-3 days the Mylar bags may, or may not, look like they have been vacuum packed. This is not significant. This outcome does not indicate that one bag has a better seal than the other, but only that more air (not oxygen) was removed prior to sealing. These absorbers remove oxygen, they do not remove air.

If you are satisfied with the seal, the finished bags are ready for storage!

Step #6: Store in a Protective Container

It is a good idea to store your Mylar Food Storage Bags in a protective container such as a lidded bucket, steel drum, or other suitable food safe unit. The container will make it easy to move and store your food supply, as well as protect the Mylar bags from punctures. Mylar is not rodent proof! Neither are thin-walled plastic containers – Heavy gauge buckets or steel containers are your best choice. If you select a "used" container, make sure that it was not previously used for non-food or hazardous items.

Make sure you also label the outside of the storage container of what is inside. Store containers in a cool dry place.

Don't just pack food for emergencies. Bulk foods repackaged and stored in Mylar bags can be your main source of dry goods for your everyday diet. This rotation of food will keep your emergency supply fresh, and it can dramatically reduce your monthly grocery costs, too!