



# Lard and Cracklings

from [cooking.nytimes.com](https://cooking.nytimes.com)

🕒 3 hours    🍽️ 1 serving

## Ingredients

1 pound pork fat, chilled leaf lard or fat back, preferably from humanely raised pork

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salt, cayenne, paprika, black pepper, five-spice powder or other spice mix for seasoning, optional

## Directions

- 1** Chop the fat into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes and place in a small covered saucepan set over low heat. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water and bring to a simmer. Stir after 30 minutes. Continue to cook, letting it bubble, and stir from time to time. When the water boils off, render for about 2 hours. The lard will clarify, and the cracklings will shrivel and shrink. As it cooks, watch and listen: turn down the heat or take the pan off the heat if it smokes or if the lard starts to brown.
- 2** When the cracklings are lightly golden and have almost stopped bubbling, remove them and drain on paper towels or a brown paper bag. Strain the lard through a cheesecloth into a jar or bowl, where it will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for several weeks. Try a crackling. If it is not crunchy and appetizing, crisp the rest on a baking sheet in a 375-degree oven for 15-20 minutes. Season if you'd like, then cool on paper towels. Cracklings, well drained and lightly covered, will keep at room temperature for at least a week.