

Clear with little sediment (meat canned raw-pack will have more sediment than a precooked pack)
Layer of fat at top not more than ½ to 1 inch

Pack

Pieces of uniform size, appropriate to serve
Packed to within ½ to 1 inch from top of jar
Full pack, but not too tight to prevent good heat penetration in processing
Liquid preferably covers meat

Container

Clean, standard jar
Vacuum sealed
Free from cracks, rust or other damage
Properly labeled

Common problem/probable reason

Fat layer too thick

Failure to remove enough fat

Evaluating pickles

See [Pickles and Relishes: Problems and Solutions, SP 50-744](#)

Judging score cards

[Pickles and Relishes Check Sheet, 512-03](#)

Appearance

Fruit or cucumber

Uniform in size, color, and shape
Plump, not shriveled or soft
Natural color characteristic of the kind of pickle
No artificial color

Liquid

Clear

Pack

Full without crowding
Sufficient liquid to cover food
Liquid to ½ inch from top of jar

Container

Clean, standard jar
Vacuum sealed
Free from cracks, rusts, or other damage
Properly labeled

Common problems/probable reasons

Shriveling

Too strong brining solution

Soft or slippery

Brine or vinegar too weak
Pickles not kept covered with liquid
Scum not removed daily during brining
Jars not sealed airtight
Pickles stored in warm area

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Revised July 1991. Revised January 2010.
