

Fruit Jam

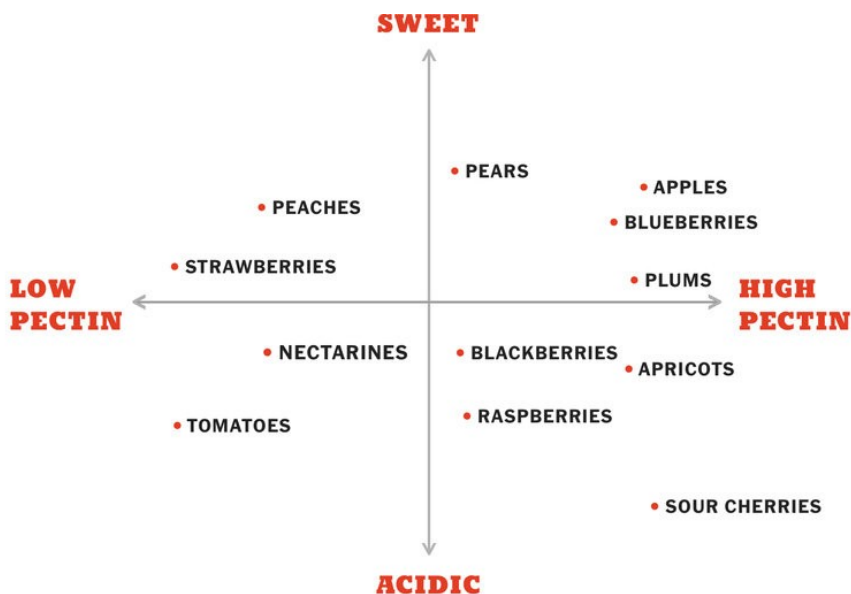
master recipes by Alison Roman, cooking.nytimes.com

Ingredients: Fruit, Sugar and Acid

The best jams strike a balance among three ingredients: fruit, sugar and acid. Peak-season fruit is thickened with granulated sugar, which, along with an acid like lemon or lime juice, helps enhance its flavor. Achieving the right proportions can be a delicate dance, but it's one worth mastering. None of these recipes include pectin. Pectin allows you to make low sugar or honey-based jam which sets up without all the sugar. finished jam can taste more like fruit instead of sugar. Some bakers recommend Pomona calcium-based pectin. Simpler ingredient pectins should maybe only include Dextrose, Pectin, Citric Acid. If using pectin, for every 4 cups of fruit puree, add 1 tablespoon of powder pectin, ¼ cup sugar and bring to tumbling boil for 5-10 minutes.



The



This chart shows some of the most commonly preserved fruits, and where they fall in relation to their pectin content and acidity.

The Fruit: Nearly any fruit can be used, but the best jam comes from juicy specimens with a balance of sweet and tart flavors and high amounts of naturally occurring pectin, like raspberries, blueberries, plums and apricots. Unlike store-bought jam, which almost always has additional pectin, a homemade jam may vary from slightly looser to remarkably firm, but trust that you're letting each fruit be its truest self, becoming as jammy or spreadable as it wants to be. Avoid overly ripe fruits; they have the least amount of pectin. Using a few unripe fruits should increase the pectin. These recipes use 4 lbs of prepared fruit, already hulled, cored or pitted etc.

The Sugar: From ¼ cup to ¾ cup sugar per pound of fruit. Sugar aids in preserving the fruit. It helps determine flavor and texture. It is necessary for jam, since fruit does not have enough natural sugar on its own to adequately gel. Stick to pure cane sugar, which won't over-power the fruit flavor. However, if you feel it needs a little more — if it's not sweet enough, or if it's too tart for your liking — you can add a bit of sugar to the recipe, to taste. If you use extremely tart fruit, you might need more to avoid jam that is too mouth-puckering. Just be sure any adjustments are made at the beginning of the cooking process.

The Acid: In these recipes we add about 1 tablespoon of lemon or lime juice per pound of fruit. Adding acid in the form of fresh lemon or lime juice is important for two reasons: First, it makes for a more well-balanced jam, returning some of the acidity lost with the addition of sugar. Second, pectin needs acid to properly activate, or firm up. The lemon or lime juice is added at the end to preserve its fresh tang and bright citrus flavors.

Prepare Your Space:

Clear your countertops, gather the equipment you'll need: Pot, utensils and strainer, a can of water to set spoon or ladle into between use, to quickly clean between uses. Place a small plate in the refrigerator to chill (you'll use this later). Paper towels. Leave your schedule open. Making jam requires your full attention to prevent scalding, burning or scorching.

1. PREPARE the CANNING BATH

In the event you don't own a proper canning bath, all you'll need is a large, wide pot. If you've got a wire rack that can fit inside, all the better to ensure the water boils under the jars as well as around them.

1. PREPARE the JARS

As a rule, hot preserves go into hot jars and cold preserves go into cold jars. You'll want to prepare hot jars as you cook your jam, or slightly before. Jam jars need to be hot (or, at least warm) to prevent cracks that can occur from pouring hot jam into cold jars.

Wash jars with warm, soapy water. Rinse jars well. If you plan on canning your jam and process less than 10 minutes, you must sterilize the jars. To do this, wash jars and lids with soapy water, dry bands, and set aside. Place jars in a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a simmer, and boil 15 minutes. Put lids in a separate small pot of hot water. Leave jars and lids in water until ready to fill. (Do not boil the lids: Their rubber seal is too delicate.)

Using clean tongs, **remove the jars from the water and place them to dry upside-down on a clean wire rack,** or right-side-up on a clean kitchen towel laid over a baking sheet.

(Some prefer to sterilize jars by running them through the dishwasher without detergent or by placing the jars on a rack in a hot oven, but those methods are not approved by the U.S.D.A.)

Cooking the Jam:

This is when water evaporates, not only thickening the mixture, but concentrating flavors. Stay alert here: You want that perfect texture — not firm or bouncy, syrupy or pourable.

To start, **toss the fruit and sugar together and let it sit at least 20 minutes before cooking,** and up to overnight. This maceration pulls the juices from the fruit, which will dissolve the sugar, jump-starting the jam-making process and preventing clumps of sugar from caramelizing.

The jam must then be cooked over high heat in order to evaporate the water as quickly as possible and harness the power of the natural pectin. Cooking time can vary, depending on a fruit's water content, but **once it's at a rolling boil, expect to cook it for at least 20 to 50 minutes.** Raspberries and blackberries tend to have less water than a strawberry or apple, making them faster to cook. The high temperature leaves the jam susceptible to burning or scorching at the base of the pot (especially so if you're not using a copper pot), so **it's extremely**

important to stir it constantly once it's started to thicken even a little. The edges of the pot are most susceptible to this kind of burning, so pay extra close attention there. As the water evaporates and the temperature rises, the jam will thicken. As you mix feel free to mash the mixture, depending on your preferred final texture. Continue cooking until jam thickens and gels, about 20 minutes. Jam will get a sheen and any foam will have moved to edges.

Skimming the jam: As the jam simmers, a whiteish, cloudy foam will most likely form. It's made up of impurities rising to the top and should be skimmed, as when making chicken stock, to prevent a cloudy or muddy result. Use a fine-mesh strainer or a shallow, wide spoon, and rinse the strainer or spoon between uses to keep the foam from returning to the jam. You can add a bit of butter to the jam after it is fully cooked and ready to can; this should get rid of any extra foam skim.

Testing the jam: When you think the jam might be close to the perfect texture, you'll want to test it for doneness. It's better to find out if the jam is too runny early, rather than once it's in the jars. While you do this, remove the pot from the heat. **Spoon a bit of hot jam onto a chilled plate and drag your finger or spoon through it.** How it moves on the plate (or doesn't) will give you an idea of how thick and jammy (or runny and loose) the jam will be once cooled completely. Typically, it will start to form a gelled skin on top, indicating it's going to set up. **If the chilled jam still seems watery or syrupy, it needs more time to cook.**

FILL and SEAL

When the jam is ready, set it aside for about 10 minutes. This will allow any chunks of fruit pieces to be evenly distributed throughout the jam. If bottled immediately, the fruit will rise to the top of the jar. Once the jam is ready, it's time to ladle it into the jars. Have your paper towels ready to wipe any spills along the rim. **It's important that the jam be as hot as possible when you fill and seal the jars.** The steaming jam makes a vacuum that sucks out the air in the jar, creating a preliminary seal.

You will want to fill the jars as close to the top as possible without overfilling, as air in the jars increases the risk of spoilage. It may take a couple of tries — and some overflowing jars — before you hit that sweet spot, but **a good rule of thumb is to aim for ¼ inch to ½ inch below the rim.** With jam, it's better to go under than over.

Wipe rim and threads of jar with a clean, damp dish cloth. Remove lid from hot water. Place lid on jar. Screw band down evenly and firmly, just until resistance is met.

When putting on the lid, **screw the band on just shy of tight.** You'll want to give the jar's contents room to expand while the jars are being processed. Although unlikely, if the jars are sealed too tightly, the glass could crack.

Once the jars are filled and sealed, place them in a large pot of boiling water, making sure they're submerged by at least 2 inches, and **boil for 15 minutes.** The boiling time can vary depending on the fruit and the size of the jars, but, for high-acid fruits in an 8-ounce to 16-ounce jar, 15 minutes will get the job done. Adjust for high-altitude canning.

Using tongs, remove each jar, and, with a dish towel to protect your hands, **screw the lid on as tightly as possible.** Let jars come to room temperature, undisturbed, before storing in a cool, dark place.

While it's not mandatory to seal the jars this way, be aware that skipping this step drastically reduces the jam's shelf life. If not canned, the jams will need to be stored in the refrigerator (or, if you like, store cooled jam in plastic bags and keep it in the freezer).

Check the Seal

While the band is there to provide added insurance, **the real seal happens in the lid**, which should be flexed concavely and unable to move or pop. **If this is not the case, you must unscrew the band, remove the lid and start over (with new lids).**

Storage:

Refrigerate: up to 1 month

Freeze: up to 3 months

Canned: a year or more

Troubleshooting

Even the best-made jams can go awry. They might scorch or develop mold, be too sweet or lose their seal, leaving you wondering what you've done wrong. Here are a few frequently asked questions – and their answers – to help guide you on your path to perfect jam.

I don't have enough blackberries. Can I add another fruit to substitute? If you're short on the amount of fruit required for a recipe, you can add another. Purists may argue differently, but perhaps they've never tasted a peach-blackberry jam. When mixing and matching, it's important to keep the same total amount of fruit (for example, if that peach-blackberry jam recipe calls for 4 pounds, supplement 3 pounds of blackberries with a pound of cut peaches) and continue with the recipe for the larger amount of fruit (here, blackberries).

My jam won't set. If you've been cooking your jam for the amount of time required and it's still not setting, cook it a few minutes longer to evaporate some more of the water in the fruit. It's also important to manage expectations. Some fruit with lower amounts of natural pectin, like strawberries, will never quite reach the same gel-like consistency as those with an abundance of it, like blueberries. As long as it's no longer syrupy, pieces of fruit swimming in a syrup, you should be all good.

My jam scorched a little on the bottom. If a corner of the pot is beginning to scorch, the jam is possibly still salvageable. Transfer the pot's contents to a large bowl and thoroughly clean the pot. Taste the fruit. If it has any burned or too-caramelized notes, it's best to take the loss and start over. If it's fine, place the fruit back in the pot and continue cooking, taking care to keep the pot directly over the burner and to stir constantly to prevent further scorching.

My jam is too sweet. Throwing in an extra tablespoon of lemon or lime juice at the end can help, but avoid adding any more than that as it could make the jam runny. Keep in mind that jam will also be sweetest when it's hot: The flavors (including its sweetness) will mellow once chilled.

The seal on my jars has broken. If you notice the lid has popped without opening, it means the lid is no longer sealed and, as a result, is ineffective at keeping bacteria and mold at bay. Since most jams are stored where we cannot keep tabs on them, it's hard to say how long a seal has been broken. Throw these jams away, just to be safe, though the jars themselves can still be reused, if sterilized.

My jam has been canned for a few days but I've noticed it fizzing, forming bubbles or growing mold. Mold growth and accidental fermentation are two telltale signs of improper canning. If you notice fizzy bubbles or blue or white mold growing on the top of the jam or inside of the jar, throw away the jam. (The jars themselves can still be reused, if sterilized.)

Berry Jam

- Yield: 4 to 6 cups (4 to 6 8-ounce jars)
- Time: about 1 hour 15 minutes, plus macerating

Jam made from peak-season berries is a far cry from anything you can buy at the grocery store. As the berries cook, the water in them evaporates, their sugars thicken and their flavors concentrate. What's left is the fruit's essence, which is why it's worth seeking out the best berries you can. This recipe works for several berry varieties, but note that some types are naturally more acidic than others, so adjust the fresh lemon or lime juice accordingly.

Ingredients:

- 4 pounds/1.8 kilograms whole blueberries or raspberries; blackberries, halved lengthwise; or 4 1/2 pounds/2 kilograms strawberries, hulled and quartered (see note)
- 3 cups/600 grams granulated sugar
- 3 to 4 tablespoons fresh lemon or lime juice (from about 2 lemons or limes)

Preparation:

1. Toss berries and sugar together in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Let sit for at least 15 minutes and up to overnight, periodically tossing to coat and to dissolve the sugar. (This will help coax the juices out of the fruit.)
2. Place a small plate in the refrigerator to chill. (You'll use this later.)
3. Bring the fruit to a strong simmer over medium heat until the berries burst and the juices start to boil, about 15 minutes. If using a vanilla bean as an add-in, put it in the pot at this point.
4. Increase the heat to medium-high. Cook the jam, at first stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon or spatula, then more frequently as the juices thicken. Cook until most of the liquid has evaporated and the fruit has begun to break down, 40 to 50 minutes. How much it breaks down will depend on its type and ripeness: For example, strawberries are likely to retain more of their shape, while raspberries will break down almost entirely.
5. As the jam cooks, the liquid will reduce, the sugars thicken and the natural pectins activate. You'll notice the liquid go from a rapid, rolling boil with smaller bubbles to a slow, thick, tarlike boil with larger bubbles: This is the stage at which it's most important to stir constantly along the bottom of the pot to prevent scorching and sticking. (Sugar is heavier than water and will concentrate there, increasing the chance that the fruit will burn.) It's also the stage at which splattering may occur, so take care in stirring.
6. Once the jam reaches a slow, thick boil, add lemon juice and continue to cook, stirring constantly until the jam returns to its earlier consistency, about another 5 minutes. To test the consistency, spoon a bit of jam onto the chilled plate, return it to the refrigerator and chill for 2 minutes. Drag your finger through it: It should hold its shape on either side without appearing watery or runny. If it's not there yet, cook a few minutes more. (Note: Some fruit, like strawberries, contain more water and less natural pectin than say, a raspberry. This means the jam will never be quite as thick or gelled, but it will still be delicious).
7. Remove from heat, and incorporate any of the add-ins listed (see notes). Pick out vanilla bean if you added it earlier. Divide jam between several 8-ounce canning jars, leaving 1/4-inch head space, and seal immediately. Can the jams or store in the refrigerator, using them within a couple of weeks.

Tips

- For a chunkier strawberry jam, leave the berries quartered. For a smoother jam, crush them with a potato masher or, alternatively, your hands.
- To elevate your jam, consider the following add-ins: For blueberries, add 1 tablespoon freshly grated lime or lemon zest; or 2 tablespoons freshly grated ginger. For strawberries, add 1 teaspoon orange flower water; or 1/2 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped. For blackberries, add 2 tablespoons freshly grated ginger; or 1 tablespoon freshly grated orange zest. For raspberries, add 2 teaspoons of rose water; or 1 tablespoon freshly grated lime zest.

Stone Fruit Jam

- Yield About 4 cups (4 8-ounce jars)
- Time About 1 hour 15 minutes, plus macerating

When it comes to summertime stone fruit, pies are often the first thing to come to mind, but jam made with peaches, plums and apricots is just as delicious and lasts much longer. Naturally rich in pectin and high in acidity, these fruits make for jam with rich textures and the best balance of sweet and tart. When choosing your fruit, look for pieces that are just ripe rather than overly ripe, as stone fruit tends to lose pectin and acidity the older it gets.

Ingredients:

- 4 ½ pounds/2 kilograms peaches, nectarines, plums or apricots, pitted, sliced or cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 ¾ cups/550 grams granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon or lime juice (from about 2 lemons or limes)

Preparation:

1. Toss fruit and sugar together in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Let sit for at least 15 minutes or up to overnight, tossing periodically to coat and to dissolve the sugar. (This will help release juice out of fruit.)
2. Place a small plate in the refrigerator to chill. (You'll use this later.)
3. Bring the fruit to a strong simmer over medium heat until the skins burst and the juices start to boil, 10 to 15 minutes. If using a vanilla bean as an add-in, put it in the pot now.
4. Increase the heat to medium-high. Cook the jam, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon or spatula at first and more frequently as juices thicken until most of the liquid has evaporated and the fruit has begun to break down, about 25 to 35 minutes. How much it breaks down will depend on the type of fruit and how ripe it is. (For example, peaches are likely to retain their shape, while plums and apricots will break down almost entirely.)
5. As the jam cooks, the liquid reduces, the sugars thicken and the natural pectins activate. You'll notice the liquid go from a rapid, rolling boil with smaller bubbles to a slow, thick, tarlike boil with larger bubbles. This is the stage at which it's most important to stir constantly along the bottom of the pot to prevent scorching and sticking. (Sugar is heavier than water and will concentrate there, increasing the chance that the fruit will burn.) It's also the stage at which splattering may occur, so take care in stirring.
6. When the jam reaches a slow, thick boil, add lemon juice and any of the add-ins (see note). Continue to cook, stirring constantly until the jam has returned to its previously thickened state, about another 5 minutes. To test the consistency, spoon a bit of jam onto the chilled plate, return it to the refrigerator and chill for 2 minutes. Drag your finger through it: It should hold its shape on either side without appearing watery or runny. If it's not there yet, cook it a few minutes more.
7. Remove from heat, and pick out vanilla bean, if you added it earlier. Divide between jars, leaving ¼ inch of space at the top of the jar, and seal immediately. Can the jams or store in the refrigerator up to 2 weeks.

Tip To elevate your jam, consider the following add-ins: For peaches or nectarines, add in 1 vanilla bean, split with seeds scraped; ½ teaspoon ground cardamom; or 2 tablespoons freshly grated ginger. For plums, add 1 teaspoon rose water or 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. For apricot, add ¾ teaspoon almond extract or 1 vanilla bean, split with seeds scraped.

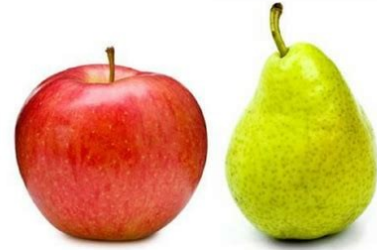
Apple or Pear Jam

- Yield: About 4 to 6 cups (4 to 6 8-ounce jars)
- Time: About 1½ hours

Thicker than applesauce, thinner than apple butter, apple jam is its own delight entirely. No food mill or masher is required: Most apples will break down into a thick, glossy mash on their own. The few bits of apple here and there even enhance the texture. Pears work equally well here, but keep in mind that their lower pectin content and acidity levels mean they'll be a touch less jamlike than a batch made with apples.

Ingredients:

- 5 ½ pounds apples or pears, peeled, cored and cut into ¾ inch pieces (about 4 pounds cut fruit)
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice (from about 2 lemons)
- add-ins (optional, see note)



Preparation:

1. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, cover fruit and any add-ins (see note) with 4 cups/960 milliliters of water. Bring to a strong simmer over medium–high heat. Cook until water is reduced by about ¾, and fruit is soft and tender (or even falling apart slightly), 20 to 30 minutes.
2. Add sugar and continue to cook, stirring occasionally at first and more frequently as the jam cooks and juices thicken until most of the liquid has evaporated and the fruit has really started to break down, another 30 to 40 minutes.
3. As the jam cooks, the liquid reduces, the sugars thicken and the natural pectins activate. You'll notice the liquid go from a rapid, rolling boil with smaller bubbles to a slow, thick, tarlike boil with larger bubbles: This is the stage at which it's most important to stir constantly along the bottom of the pot to prevent scorching and sticking. (Sugar is heavier than water and will concentrate there, increasing any chance of the fruit burning.) It's also the stage at which splattering may occur, so take care in stirring.
4. When the jam reaches a slow, thick boil, add lemon juice and any of the add-ins and continue to cook, stirring constantly until the jam has returned to its previously thickened state, about another 5 minutes. At this stage, the jam should look like a coarse, shiny applesauce. To be sure, spoon a bit of jam onto the chilled plate, return it to the refrigerator and chill for 2 minutes. Drag your finger through it: It should hold its shape on either side without appearing watery or runny. If it doesn't, cook it a few minutes more.
5. Using a spoon or other utensil, pick out any spices or vanilla beans. Divide between jars, leaving ¼ inch of space from the top of the jar, and seal immediately. Can the jams (see our [How to Make Jam](#) guide for more instruction), or store in the refrigerator, using them up within a couple of weeks.

Tip:

- To enhance your apple or pear jam, consider these add-ins, cooked into the jam in Step 2: 3 cinnamon sticks; 4 star anise; 1 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped; 1 teaspoon ground cardamom; or 2 allspice berries. Vanilla Option: You can split a vanilla bean pod lengthwise, scrape the seeds with the back of a paring knife and add the seeds and vanilla pod halves to fruit mixture. Cover berry mixture and refrigerate for 1 to 24 hours. Pull vanilla pods & beans out before cooking fruit.

Fresh Strawberry Jam

Recipe #1

foodnetwork.com

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 20 min

Total Time: 30 min

Yield: 4 cups (2 pints)



Ingredients:

2 cups sugar

1 large lemon, zested and juiced

1 1/2 pints fresh strawberries, hulled, halved

Directions:

Combine the sugar, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a small saucepan and cook over very low heat for 10 minutes, until the sugar is dissolved. Add the strawberries and continue to cook over very low heat for 20 minutes, until the strawberries release some of their juices and the mixture boils slowly. Cook until a small amount of the juice gels on a very cold plate. (I keep one in the freezer.) Pour carefully into 2 pint canning jars and either seal or keep refrigerated. Use immediately, or follow proper canning guidelines below.

Recipe #2

allrecipes.com

Prep Time: 20 mins

Cook Time: 20 mins

Total Time: 40 mins

Yield: 5 cups (2.5 pints)



4 cups white sugar

1/4 cup lemon juice

2 lbs fresh strawberries, hulled

Crush strawberries in a wide bowl in batches until you have 4 cups of mashed berries. Combine mashed strawberries, sugar, and lemon juice in a heavy-bottomed saucepan; stir over low heat until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to high, and bring the mixture to a full rolling boil. Continue to boil, stirring often, until the mixture reaches 220°F. Check doneness after 10 to 15 minutes by dropping a small spoonful of jam onto a frozen plate. Let sit for 1 to 2 minutes; if jam appears to gel, it is ready. Continue cooking if jam appears thin and runny.

CANNING Strawberry Jam

Transfer the cooked jam when it reaches the gelling stage, into hot sterile jars, filling to within 1/4 inch of the top. Top with lids and screw rings on tightly. Place a rack in the bottom of a large stockpot and fill it halfway with water. Bring to a boil and lower jars 2 inches apart into the boiling water using a holder. Pour in more boiling water to cover jars by at least 1 inch. Bring to a rolling boil, cover, and process for 10 minutes. Remove the jars from the stockpot and let rest, several inches apart, for 12 to 24 hours. Store in a cool, dark area.

Jars for canning jam should have to be sterilized only if the food to be preserved will be processed for less than 10 minutes in a boiling-water bath or pressure canner.

Strawberry & Fruit Jam Ratios & Conversions:

for 1 lb fresh fruit, add 1 – 1½ cup sugar

for 2 lb fresh fruit, add 1 ½ – 2 lb sugar

for 4 lb fresh fruit, add 3 cups sugar

for every cup of fresh fruit, add ¾ cup sugar

1 pint strawberries = 12 oz or ¾ lb.

2 pints strawberries = 1 qt = 24 oz or 1 ½ lb

1 pint strawberries = 1 ¼ cups puréed strawberries

1 pint strawberries = 1 ½ - 2 cups sliced strawberries

1 pint strawberries = 12 large, 24 medium, 36 small berries

1 cup whole strawberries = 8 large strawberries

1 cup whole strawberries = 5 oz fresh strawberries

1 cup whole strawberries = ½ cup purée

1 lb whole strawberries = 3 ¾ cups whole strawberries

1 lb whole strawberries = 2 ¾ cups sliced strawberries

10 oz frozen strawberries = 1 ½ cups

20 oz frozen strawberries = 4 cups = 2 ½ cups sliced = 2 ½ cups puréed strawberries



More NOTES on Canning Jam

Properly handled sterilized equipment will keep canned foods in good condition for one year. All items used in the process of making jams, jellies, and preserves must be clean. Making sure all equipment and surfaces in your canning area are clean is the first step in canning. This includes any towels used, and especially your hands.

Jars must be sterilized if you process canned jam less than 10 minutes. To sterilize jars before filling with jams, pickles, or preserves, wash them in hot, soapy water. Then you can place jars without touching, on a tray, place tray in a preheated 175°F oven for 25 minutes. Or run them through a dishwasher on high heat. Or, boil the jars in a large saucepan, covered with water, for 15 minutes. Take jars off heat, add lids to hot water, keep hot til used. Be sure the tongs are sterilized too, by dipping the ends in boiling water for a few minutes.

Apricot Jam w/o Sugar

Select fruit which is ripe, but not too ripe, and has great flavor. Fruit that is just ripe, including some that are slightly unripe, will form a jam more easily as it is more acidic and contains more pectin which will help it to set. If you want to make your jams entirely sugar-free, you'll have to rely on the sweetness of the fruit, and expect it to be more tart than you are used to. You can easily get used to food tasting different, especially when you are doing it for health reasons. And when you open a jar of sugar-free apricot jam, you can add raw honey to it then.



Apricots are a high-acid fruit, so should be preserved in sterilized jars. Some sources say that jars can be sterilized in the dishwasher, or in the oven, though neither of these methods are considered safe by the USDA. To sterilize jars, place them inside a large pot or water-bath canner, letting them rest on a rack.

Cover the jars with hot, not yet boiling, water.

Bring water to a boil for 10 minutes, adjusting if necessary for altitude.

Turn off the heat.

Remove jars using tongs or a jar lifter.

Drain jars on a rack, or set aside to dry on a clean cloth.

At this time you will also need to clean the lids/rings in hot, soapy water. Do not put them in boiling water, so as to not harm the rubber seals.

Cut the fruit into consistent sized chunks. Place them in a flat, heavy-bottomed pot, tall enough to leave room at the top for the jam to foam. Cooking time is anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the size of your batch. The longer the better, to heat up to a high core temperature. It takes some time for the apricots to “melt down” and become mushy. At this stage it is important to stir frequently. Apricots have a tendency to burn on the bottom of the pot. You can add seasonings at this stage; kirsch, rosemary, basil, chia seeds, ginger.

Ladle into jars, leaving 1/4" head space. Use a water bath canner and process for 5-10 minutes. Then remove the jars and let them come to room temperature naturally. Check the lids after a day has passed to make sure they have sealed. The old fashioned way: instead of a water bath canner, fill jars with hot jam, tighten lids by hand, and turn them upside down on a wire rack to cool.

Blueberry Jam

recipe № 1: theseasonedmom.com/blueberry-jam

Ingredients:

- **Blueberries:** only use fresh, ripe blueberries for this recipe. They will have the best acidity and tannins to give the jam a more complex flavor, and the skins will be the proper texture. Frozen blueberries tend to be mushier and more watery than fresh fruit when thawed, which will likely alter the consistency of your jam.
- **Lemon juice:** you won't actually taste the lemon in the jam. Instead, the lemon juice serves a very specific purpose. The lemon juice lowers the pH of the jam, which neutralizes negative charges on the strands of pectin and helps your jam set.
- **Granulated sugar:** I know that 8 cups sounds like a lot of sugar, but trust me: you need all of it! Stick with regular granulated sugar (instead of sugar substitutes like Splenda or stevia) and do not decrease the quantity called for in the recipe. Jam making is an exact science, so measuring the correct quantities of fruit, sugar and pectin are essential to a successful batch of jam.
- **Butter:** this ingredient is optional. You can't taste the butter in the final product; however, it does serve a specific purpose. As you heat the berries, the proteins open up into strands that get tangled up and help stabilize the bubbles into a foam. Adding the butter (a fat) helps to prevent this tangling, and therefore reduces the amount of foam on top of your jam.
- **Powdered fruit pectin:** pectin is a natural fiber found in plant cell walls, and most concentrated in the skin of fruits. It is water-soluble and binds with sugar and fruit acid to form a gel. The pectin is a necessary ingredient in this recipe, as it helps the jam set properly. The pectin also shortens the cooking time, resulting in a fresher blueberry flavor. *Do not* substitute with liquid pectin, as the two are not interchangeable.



Notes: This recipe is incredibly simple — it's just important to get all of your ingredients and equipment prepared in advance because the process moves quickly. In less than 45 minutes, you can have an entire batch (12 jars) of homemade blueberry jam.

Equipment:

- **12 sterilized half-pint mason jars and lids:** this recipe yields about 11-12 cups of jam, so you can use any size jars that you prefer (or a combination) to accommodate this amount.
- **A sterilized funnel & tongs:** this makes it easier and safer.
- **Saucepan:** for cooking the berries. Allow plenty of room for the berries to boil, bubble, and foam!
- **Canner or Large Pot for Boiling Jars:** this needs to be very deep so that you can cover the jars with at least 1-2 inches of water. I use my deepest stock pot for this step, since I don't have an official canner to process the jars.
- **Mixing bowl. Potato masher or food processor:** to smash the berries before cooking. **Wooden spoon.**

Instructions:

Sterilize the jars and lids use the dishwasher, and make sure that the jars and lids stay hot in the machine until ready to fill them.

Crush the Blueberries. I use a potato masher to squish my berries, but you can also pulse a few times in a food processor if that's easier. Just don't puree the fruit — you want some texture to the berries since they will continue to cook down on the stovetop.

1. **Combine Blueberries, Lemon Juice, Butter and Pectin.** Place the crushed blueberries, lemon juice, butter and pectin in a large Dutch oven or saucepan.
2. **Boil.** Bring the blueberry mixture to full rolling boil, stirring constantly.
3. **Add Sugar.** As soon as the mixture boils, stir in the sugar. Return to a full rolling boil and **boil exactly 1 minute**, stirring constantly.
4. **Fill Jars.** Remove the berries from the heat, skim off the foam, and quickly ladle the jam into hot jars. Add the lids and rings.
5. **Process Jars in Boiling Water.** Set the hot jars on a rack in a canner or in a large pot of boiling water. Boil for 10 minutes.
6. **Cool.** Place the jars on a towel or rack to cool overnight.

Blueberry Jam

recipe № 2: thecreeksidecook.com/blueberry-preserves-no-pectin-recipe

Ingredients

- 10 cups of fresh blueberries
- 6 cups of granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons of lemon zest
- ⅓ cup fresh lemon juice



Instructions

1. This is a canned preserve, so it's important to make sure your jars and lids are sterilized. If you plan to freeze yours, then you can skip over this first part.
2. To begin, fill a large stockpot half full of water [you are going to want the water to be over the tops of your jars by a couple inches, so make sure you have enough water in there for that] and set over a medium burner. Make sure the rack is in the bottom.
3. Carefully put in the jars and lids. Once this comes up to a boil, cover and turn off heat. You are going to turn it back on high for about the last 10 minutes of the preserve cooking time, to sterilize the jars and have the water hot enough to can the final product.
4. Wash blueberries and pick over, removing any debris and spoiled berries.
5. Place about half of the berries in a 5 to 8 quart heavy pot. Crush well with a potato masher.
6. Stir in the other half of the berries, the sugar, salt and lemon zest.
7. Place the pot over a medium flame, and cover with a lid. Stir every few minutes.
8. Once the mixture comes up to a simmer or low boil, remove the lid, and continue to stir every 5 minutes, or more often if they start to stick at all.
9. Place a small plate in the freezer – this will be to test the doneness of the preserves.
10. Cook about 25 minutes, and test a small amount on the cold plate you put in the freezer. After sitting on the plate for a minute or so, the preserves should look pretty thick, and should not run very freely if you tip the plate. If the mixture is still too thin, keep cooking, and check again about every 5 minutes, returning the plate to the freezer after each check. How long it takes is going to depend largely on the moisture content of the berries you are using. This batch took about 40 minutes total.
11. At the 30 minute mark, return your large pot of water and jars to a boil.
12. When the preserves are thick enough, stir in the lemon juice and cook an additional 5 minutes.
13. Carefully remove the jars from the boiling water in the large pot, and set upright on a towel on your work surface. Keep the heat on under the pot.
14. Ladle the preserves into the jars – the big funnel in the canning tools set helps keep the edges of the jars clean. Jams don't need very much headspace above the surface of the jam itself – about ¼ inch between the top of the jam and the rim of the jar is enough room. Any more than that leaves too much chance for bacteria to grow, so fill them right up to that level.
15. Wipe the edges of the jars clean with a damp cloth, and put on the lids and rings. Don't screw the rings down super tight – just until they resist a bit is fine. If you have less than enough to fill the final jar, just put that one in the fridge to eat.
16. Carefully place the covered jars back in the large pot of water with jar tongs to gently set the jars upright on the bottom.
17. Once the water is back up to a full boil, set the timer for 10 minutes. When the time is up, carefully remove the jars to a wooden cutting board, or a dry towel on the counter - don't use same towel as before since it might be damp and cooler and could break the hot jars.
18. You will probably start to hear the centers of the lids popping down pretty quickly.
19. Cool completely and check to make sure all of the centers of the lids have popped down. Refrigerate any jars with a dome still on the lid, and eat up first. When the jars are fully cool, you can remove the rings if you like, though I leave them on.
20. Store in a fairly cool spot, and when opening the jars, inspect the contents, discarding any jars with mold or questionable appearance. Preserves will keep very well for up a year, or even longer, though the quality may suffer somewhat after a year.