

Let's Preserve Jelly, Jam, Spreads

General canning procedures

Prepare products as described in the following pages. All products should be filled hot into sterile half-pint or pint canning jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. To sterilize empty jars, put them open side up on a rack in a boiling-water canner. Fill the canner and jars with hot (not boiling) water to 1 inch above top of jars. Boil jars 10 minutes. Remove and drain hot sterilized jars one at a time and fill with food. Food residue should be removed from the jar sealing edge with a clean, damp paper towel. New two-piece canning lids prepared according to manufacturer's directions should be added. After screw bands are tightened, jars should be processed in a boiling water canner.

To process in a boiling water canner, fill canner halfway with water and preheat to 180°F. Load sealed jars into the canner rack and lower with handles; or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto rack in canner. Add water if needed to a level of 1 inch above jars and add cover. When water boils vigorously, lower heat to maintain a gentle boil, and process jars of the product for the time given in Table 1.

Process times

Table 1. Recommended processing times in a boiling water canner for jellies, jams, and spreads

Product	Style of pack	Jar size	Process time at altitudes of	
			0–1000 ft (in minutes)	1001–6000 ft (in minutes)
All jellies and jams with or without added pectin	Hot	Half-pints and pints	5	10
Peach-pineapple spread	Hot	Half-pints	5	10
		Pints	10	15

After processing is completed, remove jars from the canner with a jar lifter and place on a towel or rack. Do not retighten screw bands. Air-cool jars 12 to 24 hours. Remove screw bands and check lid seals. If the center of the lid is indented, wash, dry, label, and store jar in a clean, cool, dark place. If lid is unsealed, examine and replace the jar if defective; use new lids, and reprocess as before. Wash screw bands and store separately. Jelly, jam, and spreads are best if consumed within a year and safe as long as lids remain vacuum sealed.

Making jelly without added pectin

Use only firm fruit naturally high in pectin. Select a mixture of about 3/4 ripe and 1/4 underripe fruit. One pound of fruit should yield at least 1 cup of clear juice. Do not use commercially canned or frozen fruit juices because their pectin content is too low. Use of peels and cores adds pectin to the juice during cooking of the fruit and increases jelly firmness.

Wash all fruit thoroughly before cooking. Cut firm, larger fruit into small pieces. Crush soft fruit or berries. Add water to fruit as listed in Table 2. Put fruit and water in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for the amount of time listed or until the fruit is soft.

When fruit is tender, press lightly through a colander. Then, let juice drip through a double layer of cheesecloth or a jelly bag. Excessive pressing or squeezing of cooked fruit will cause cloudy jelly.

Using no more than 6 to 8 cups of extracted fruit juice at a time, measure and combine the proper quantities of juice, sugar, and lemon juice listed in Table 2 and heat to boiling. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Boil over high heat, stirring frequently, until the gelling point is reached.

To test jelly doneness, use one of the following methods:

Temperature test: Boil to a temperature of 220°F at sea level, 218°F at 1000 feet of altitude, 216°F at 2000 feet, or 214°F at 3000 feet. Use a jelly or candy thermometer to measure temperature.

Sheet or spoon test: Dip a cool metal spoon into the boiling jelly mixture. Raise the spoon about 12 inches above the pan (out of steam). Turn the spoon so the liquid runs off the side. The jelly is done when the syrup forms two drops that flow together and sheet or hang off the edge of the spoon.

When the jelly is done, remove it from heat and quickly skim off foam. Using a wide-mouth funnel, ladle the jelly into sterile jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

Table 2. Measures for preparing jellies without added pectin

	To extract juice				Jelly yield from 4 cups of juice (in half-pints)
	Cups water to be added per pound of fruit	Minutes to simmer before extracting juice	Add to each cup of strained juice:		
			Sugar (in cups)	Lemon juice (optional)	
Apples	1	20 to 25	3/4	1-1/2 tsp	4 to 5
Blackberries	0 to 1/4	5 to 10	3/4 to 1	--	7 to 8
Crabapples	1	20 to 25	1	--	4 to 5
Grapes	0 to 1/4	5 to 10	3/4 to 1	--	8 to 9
Plums	1/2	15 to 20	3/4	--	8 to 9

Preparing jams without added pectin

For best flavor, use fully ripe fruit. Wash and rinse all fruit thoroughly before cooking. Do not soak. Remove stems, skins, and pits from fruit; cut into pieces and crush. For berries, remove stems and blossoms, and crush. Seedy berries may be put through a sieve or food mill. Measure crushed fruit into large saucepan, using the ingredients in Table 3. Add sugar and bring to a boil while stirring rapidly and constantly. Continue to boil until mixture thickens. As you test for thickness, remember to allow for thickening during cooling.

To test for thickness, use one of the following methods. *Temperature test:* Use a jelly or candy thermometer to measure that jam has been boiled to a temperature of 220°F at 2000 feet of altitude or 214°F at 3000 feet.

Refrigerator test: Jam should be removed from heat for this test. Pour a small amount of boiling jam on a cold plate and put it in the freezer for a few minutes. The mixture gels when done.

When jam is done, remove it from heat and quickly skim off foam. Using a wide-mouth funnel, ladle the jam into sterile jars, leaving 1/4-inch head-space. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

Table 3. Measures for preparing jams without added pectin

	Cups crushed fruit	Cups sugar	Tbsp lemon juice	Jam yield (in half-pints)
Apricots	4 to 4-1/2	4	2	5 to 6
Berries	4	4	0	3 to 4
Peaches	5-1/2 to 6	4 to 5	2	6 to 7

Jellies and jams with added pectin

Fresh fruits and juices, as well as some commercially canned or frozen fruit juice, may be used with commercially prepared powdered or liquid pectins. The order of combining ingredients depends on the type of pectin used. Complete directions for a variety of fruit are provided with packaged pectin. Jelly or jam made with added pectin requires less cooking, generally gives a larger yield, and has more natural fruit flavor. In addition, using added pectin eliminates the need to test for doneness. The following recipes are normally available with packaged pectins:

Jellies: Apple, crabapple, blackberry, boysenberry, dewberry, currant, elderberry, grape, mayhaw, mint, peach, plum, black or red raspberry, loganberry, rhubarb, and strawberry.

Jams: Apricot, blackberry, boysenberry, dewberry, loganberry, red raspberry, youngberry, blueberry, cherry, currant, fig, gooseberry, grape, orange marmalade, peach, pear, plum, rhubarb, strawberry, and spiced tomato.

Be sure to use Mason canning jars, self-sealing two-piece lids, and process the jars in boiling water as described on page 1. Purchase packaged pectins needed each year. Old pectins may result in poor gels. The following special jelly and jam recipes use packaged pectin.

Grape-plum jelly with pectin

3-1/2 lb ripe plums
3 lb ripe Concord grapes
1 cup water
1/2 tsp butter or margarine (optional ingredient to reduce foaming)
8-1/2 cups sugar
1 box (1-3/4 oz) powdered pectin

Yield: About 10 half-pints

Preparation. Wash and pit grapes and plums; do not peel. Thoroughly crush plums and grapes, one layer at a time, in a saucepan. Add water. Bring to a boil, cover, and simmer 10 minutes. Strain juice through a jelly bag or double layer of cheesecloth. Measure sugar and set aside. Combine 6-1/2 cups of juice with butter and pectin in a large saucepan. Bring to a hard boil over heat, stirring constantly. Add the sugar and return to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, skim off foam, and quickly fill into sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

Blueberry-spice jam with pectin

2-1/2 pt ripe blueberries
1 tbsp lemon juice
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg or cinnamon
5-1/2 cups sugar
3/4 cup water
1 box (1-3/4 oz) powdered pectin

Yield: About 5 half-pints

Preparation. Wash and thoroughly crush blueberries, one layer at a time, in a large saucepan. Add lemon juice, spice, and water. Stir in pectin and bring to a full rolling boil over high heat, stirring frequently. Add the sugar and return to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam, and fill into sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

Pear-apple jam with pectin

About 2 lb fully ripe pears
1 large apple
6-1/2 cups sugar
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/3 cup bottled lemon juice
6 oz liquid pectin

Yield: About 7 to 8 half-pints

Preparation. Wash, peel, and core pears. Crush well and measure 2 cups into a large saucepan. Wash, peel, core, and finely chop 1 cup of apples. Add apple to pears and stir in cinnamon. Thoroughly mix sugar and lemon juice into fruits and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Immediately stir in pectin. Bring to a full rolling boil, and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam, and fill into sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

Strawberry-rhubarb jelly with pectin

1-1/2 lb red stalks of rhubarb
1-1/2 qt ripe strawberries
1/2 tsp butter or margarine (optional ingredient to reduce foaming)
6 cups sugar
6 oz liquid pectin

Yield: About 7 half-pints

Preparation. Wash and cut rhubarb into 1-inch pieces and blend or grind. Wash, stem, and crush strawberries, one layer at a time, in a large saucepan. Add butter, if desired, and sugar, thoroughly mixing into juice. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Immediately stir in pectin. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam, and fill into sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

The following recipes use reduced amounts of sugar:

Grape jelly with gelatin

2 tbsp unflavored gelatin powder
1 bottle (24 oz) unsweetened grape juice
2 tbsp bottled lemon juice
2 tbsp liquid artificial sweetener (Saccharin is acceptable)

Yield: 3 half-pints

Preparation. In a saucepan, soften the gelatin in the grape and lemon juices. Bring to a full rolling boil to dissolve gelatin. Boil 1 minute and remove from heat. Stir in sweetener. Pour quickly into hot sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids. Do not process or freeze. Store in refrigerator and use within 4 weeks.

Apple jelly with gelatin

2 tbsp unflavored gelatin powder
1 qt bottled unsweetened apple juice
2 tbsp bottled lemon juice
2 tbsp liquid Saccharin sweetener
Food coloring, if desired

Yield: 4 half-pints

Preparation. In a saucepan, soften gelatin in apple and lemon juices. To dissolve gelatin, bring to a full rolling boil and boil 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in sweetener and food coloring, if desired. Pour into sterile half-pint jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids. Do not process or freeze. Store in refrigerator and use within 4 weeks.

Variation: For spiced apple jelly, add two 3-inch sticks of cinnamon and four whole cloves to mixture before boiling. Remove both spices before adding the sweetener and food coloring.

Peach-pineapple spread

4 cups drained peach pulp
2 cups drained, unsweetened crushed pineapple
1/4 cup bottled lemon juice

Yield: 5 to 6 half-pints

Preparation. Thoroughly wash 4 to 6 pounds of firm, ripe peaches. Drain well. Peel and remove pits. Grind fruit flesh with a medium or coarse blade, or crush with a fork. Do not use a blender. Place ground or crushed fruit in a 2-quart saucepan. Heat slowly to release juice, stirring constantly, until fruit is tender. Place cooked fruit in a jelly bag or strainer lined with four layers of cheesecloth. Allow juice to drip about 15 minutes. Save the juice for jelly or other uses. Measure 4 cups of drained fruit pulp for making spread. Combine the 4 cups of pulp, pineapple, and lemon juice in a 4-quart saucepan. Add up to 2 cups of sugar, if desired, and mix well. Heat and boil gently for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring often. Fill quickly into jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process the jars as described in Table 1.

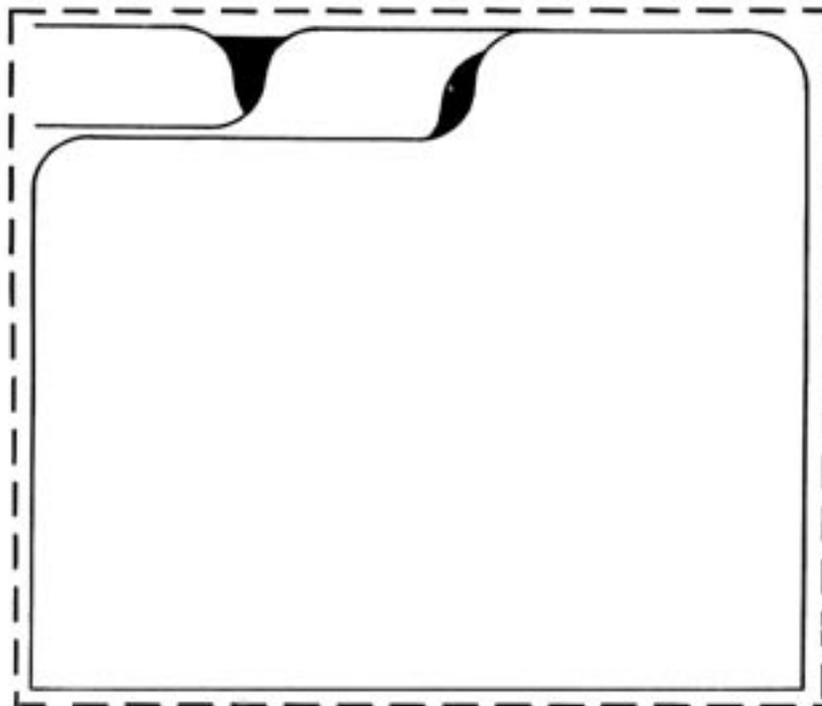
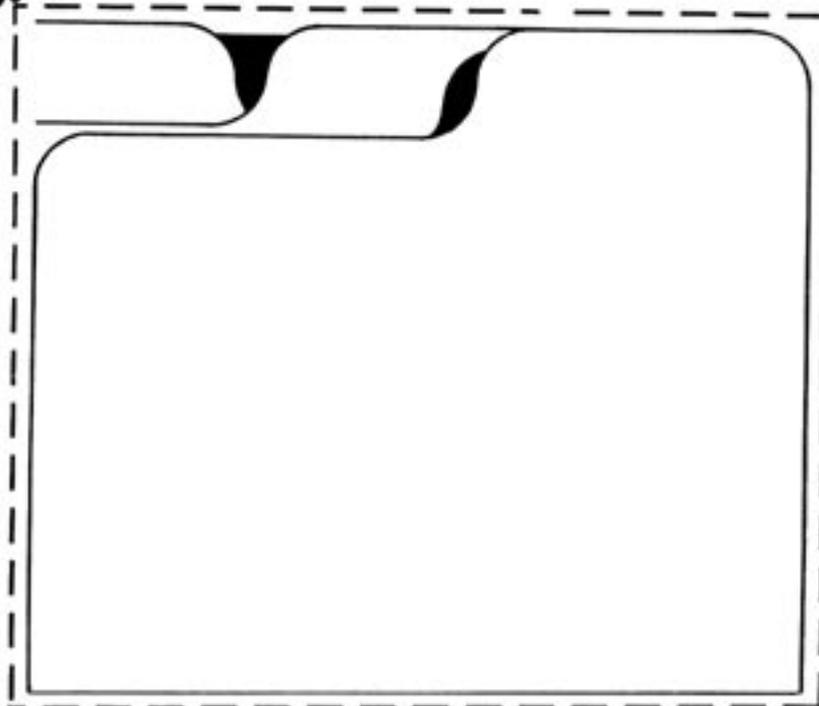
Variation: This recipe may also be made with any combination of peaches, nectarines, apricots, and plums. It may also be made without sugar or with as little as 2 cups sugar. Nonnutritive sweeteners may be added; however, the sweetening power of aspartame may be lost within 3 to 4 weeks.

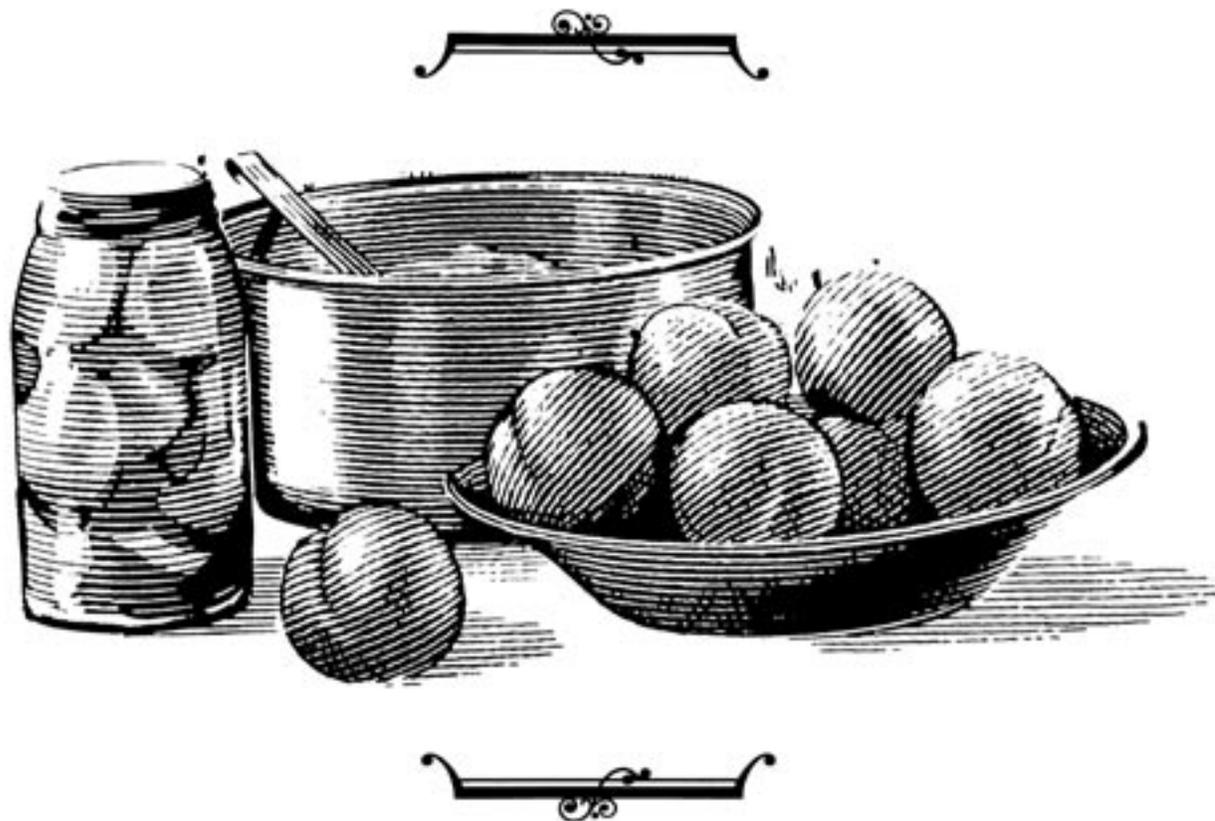
Nutritional information

Table 4. Average content of a tablespoon serving of jam and jelly

	Canned jam	Canned jelly
Calories	54	49
Carbohydrates (g)	14	12.7
Fats (g)	--	--
Sodium (mg)	2	3

My Own Recipes





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