

## Traditional Strawberry Jam

Makes about 8 half pints (8 oz)

5 cups crushed strawberries, hulled (about 5 lbs or 3 quarts)  
4 tablespoons lemon juice (or 1 fresh lemon zested and juiced)  
6 tablespoons Pectin (or 1 x 1.75-ounce regular powdered pectin)  
7 cups granulated sugar \*\*if you want to make reduced sugar jam, use 4 cups\*\*  
½ teaspoon butter  
8 (80z) half pint glass preserving jars with lids and bands

1. PREPARE boiling water canner, jars, and other equipment.
2. CRUSH berries in an 8-quart heavy kettle or pot using a potato masher or fork. Continue adding berries until you have 5 cups crushed berries. Add lemon juice (or lemon juice and lemon zest). Variation: hull and crush strawberries up to 48 hours in advance and let sit, covered, in refrigerator.
3. STIR IN pectin and butter. Bring to a full, rolling boil. Stir constantly to prevent burning.
4. ADD entire measure of sugar all at once, stirring to dissolve. Return mixture to a full rolling boil. Boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam if necessary.
5. LADLE hot jam into hot jars leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Apply band until fit is fingertip tight.
6. PROCESS in boiling water canner for 10 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 12 to 24 hours. Lids should not flex up and down when center is pressed. Turn jars top to bottom occasionally to distribute fruit as jam is cooling.

**Vanilla Strawberry Jam:** Add half a vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise, to the crushed strawberries. Cook as directed and remove vanilla bean before ladling jam into jars. The resulting jam will be enhanced with subtle yet distinct vanilla overtones.

**Strawberry Balsamic Jam:** Reduce the lemon juice to 1 tbsp and add 3 tbsp good-quality balsamic vinegar. Balsamic vinegar accents the strawberry flavor and gives the jam a robust taste.

**Lemon Strawberry Jam:** Add the grated zest of 1 large lemon to the crushed strawberries.

**Peppered Strawberry Jam:** Stir ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper into the cooked jam just before ladling it into the jars. Pepper accents and compliments strawberries' sweet flavor. Be sure to use freshly ground pepper, which delivers a fresher-quality flavor.

Other Kinds of Fruit Jam: use the same ratios as specified in recipe above (5 cups fruit : 7 or 4 cups sugar : 3 tbsp lemon juice ; 6 tbsp pectin). You can add spices or other flavorings. Try peaches with 1 tsp cinnamon + ¼ tsp nutmeg; blueberries with ½ tsp cinnamon + ¼ tsp allspice + dash of cloves.

Adapted from <http://www.freshpreserving.com/recipe.aspx?r=265>

## Basics of Boiling Water Canning

**Step 1: prepare the Food.** Follow the recipe! Use the type of pectin specified in recipe. When selecting new recipes to try, be certain the recipes are appropriate for long-term storage (i.e. not refrigerator jam) and boiling water canning (as opposed to a pressure canner). Doubling or tripling recipes can affect the set of jams and jellies.

**Step 2: Prepare the Jars.** While preparing the food to be canned, heat water in the canner. Position the rack in the bottom of the canner. Check jars for nicks, cracks, and rough edges. Sterilize jars at a minimum temperature of 180oF for a minimum of 5 minutes. Note that if you are doing a hot pack, you will need to sterilize the lids and rings in hot 180oF (not boiling) water. Exposing the lids to extremely hot temperatures will cause the compound in the lids to break down.

**Step 3: Fill the Jars.** Pack the jars as tightly as you can with the food without crushing it. Top with any hot liquid as specified in the recipe. Remove air bubbles by inserting a spatula down along the sides of the jar. Measure headspace, adding or removing food as needed. Wipe rims and threads of jar to remove residue that may interfere with seal.

**Step 4: Put on Lid.** Set lids on jar and screw on ring no more than fingertip-tight, just tight enough that you could turn the band another ½ to ¼ inch. This is important for a proper seal.

**Step 5: Process the Jars.** Work quickly to ensure that jars and food do not lose temperature. Lower jars in to canner. Jars need to be covered with 1 to 2 inches of water. Start processing time from the moment the water starts to boil after the jars are added. Keep at a low, roiling boil. Use process times specified in recipe. Processing too short a time means jars may not seal properly; too long a time will overcook food.

**Step 6: Cool the Jars.** Remove jars from canner and set on a wire rack or towel on the countertop (cold, bare countertops can crack jars). Do not tighten bands. Allow 12 to 24 hours to cool. After that time, test seal by firmly pressing on the center of the lid. It should not give. If properly sealed, store jars in a cool, dry place for up to one year. If it makes a popping sound, it is not properly sealed. You can, in theory, reprocess the jars again to try to get a proper seal, however it is safer to store the jars in the refrigerator and consume the food within 2-3 weeks. If you give away food in jars with an improper seal, be sure to communicate this clearly to the recipient!

*Adapted from 'You Can Better'; Better Homes and Gardens, Wiley and Sons, 2010*

## Online Home Canning Resources

**Food in jars:** excellent home canning blog with lots of creative recipes. The author, Marisa McClellan, has also just published a cookbook called 'Food in Jars'

<http://www.foodinjars.com/>

**Fresh Preserving:** commercial website from the makers of Ball and Kerr jars. Some good recipes can be found here, as well as a complete product line of Ball products.

<http://www.freshpreserving.com>

**National Center for Home Food Preservation:** an online self-study course in food preservation from the University of Georgia.

<http://nchfp.uga.edu/>

**Pick Your Own:** search around the website for all kinds of information about fruit, pectin, and the process of canning (not to mention how to locate pick-your-own-farms).

<http://pickyourown.org/allaboutcanning.htm>

**UAF Cooperative Extension:** in the 'Food, Nutrition, and health' section, you'll find all kinds of free online publications and recipes.

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/catalog/>

**USDA complete Guide to Home Canning, 2009 revision:** everything you ever wanted to know about home canning.

[http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications\\_usda.html](http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html)