

NO COOK FREEZER JAM

Version 1: No-Cook Pectin

Ingredients for 5 half-pints:

- 4 cups crushed fruit (fresh or frozen)
- 1 1/2 cups sugar or no-calorie granular sweetener
- 1 pouch no-cook freezer jam fruit pectin

Directions:

1. Place prepared fruit in a bowl and crush to desired consistency. If using frozen fruit, allow it to thaw in the refrigerator before crushing.
2. Combine sugar and pectin in a small bowl and blend well. Stir sugar mixture into crushed fruit and stir for 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean, freezer-safe containers leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Secure lids and let stand 30 minutes to thicken. Note: freezer jam set is softer than cooked jam.
4. Store in freezer for up to 1 year.

Tips:

- Works well with strawberries, peaches, blueberries, raspberries, or a combination of fruits
- For best results use ripe, flavorful fruit at peak season
- Label containers with the fruit type and date before freezing
- Once thawed, refrigerate and use within 3 weeks

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Version 2: Cooked Pectin Alternative

Ingredients for 5 half-pints:

2 cups crushed strawberries (about 2 lbs)

2 tablespoons lemon juice

4 1/2 cups sugar

3/4 cup water

6 tablespoons classic fruit pectin

Directions:

1. Combine crushed strawberries and lemon juice in a large bowl. Add sugar and mix thoroughly. Let stand 10 minutes.
2. Whisk water and pectin in a small saucepan. Bring to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 1 minute, continuing to stir.
3. Add cooked pectin mixture to fruit mixture and stir for 3 minutes.
4. Fill clean plastic freezer jars or hot glass jars leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Loosely apply lids and let jam stand in refrigerator until set, no longer than 24 hours.
5. Serve immediately, refrigerate up to 3 weeks, or freeze up to 1 year.

Tips:

- For best results always use ripe, high-quality fruit at peak season
- A full rolling boil cannot be stirred down, make sure you reach this stage before timing the 1 minute boil
- This method produces a firmer set than the no-cook pectin version
- Works well with strawberries, peaches, raspberries, or blueberries

STRAWBERRY FRUIT LEATHER

Ingredients for 1 large sheet (13 x 15 inches):

4 cups hulled strawberries, about 2 lbs, which purees down to roughly 2 cups

1 to 2 tablespoons honey or sugar, optional, only if the berries are tart

1 teaspoon lemon juice, optional

Directions:

1. Blend the berries into a smooth puree. Taste it before you add anything. Peak-season fruit usually needs nothing at all.
2. If the berries are tart, add the honey or sugar and the lemon juice and blend again. Honey holds up better than sugar for long storage because it does not crystallize.
3. Line the tray with a fruit leather sheet or parchment. Spread the puree about 1/8 inch thick, a touch thicker at the edges since the edges dry first. Keep the puree away from the outer rim of the tray.
4. Dry at 140°F. Start checking at 4 hours. Most batches finish between 6 and 8 hours.
5. It is done when the center is no longer sticky and pressing it leaves no indentation.
6. While it is still warm, peel it off the sheet in one piece and roll it up in parchment or plastic wrap. Let it cool, then rewrap.
7. Cut the roll into strips.

DRIED STRAWBERRIES

Ingredients:

Fresh strawberries, washed and hulled. That is the entire list.

Directions:

1. Slice the berries about 1/4 inch thick. Keep the slices the same thickness so every tray finishes at the same time.
2. Arrange them in a single layer, skin side down so they do not stick, with none of the slices touching.
3. Dry at 135°F for 20 - 24 hours, depending on how thick and how juicy the berries are. Rotate the trays and turn the slices about halfway through.
4. For chewy, stop when the slices are pliable and leathery with no beads of moisture when you press one between your fingers. For crisp, keep going a few hours longer.
5. Store airtight in a cool, dark place.