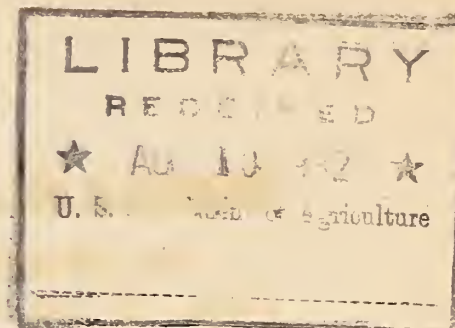


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF HOME ECONOMICS
WASHINGTON, D. C.



HOMEMADE FRUIT JELLIES

An ideal jelly has a bright color and delicate flavor, characteristic of the fruit from which it is made. When turned out onto a plate, a mold of jelly should be translucent and should hold its shape but quiver when the plate is moved. Jelly should be so tender that it cuts easily with a spoon, yet breaks with a sharp cleavage line and shows sharp faces.

In order to make a fruit jelly which sets successfully, at least three substances must be present in the right proportions - pectin, acid, and sugar.

The following fruits, because they are naturally tart and rich in pectin, are good jelly makers: Currants; red and black raspberries; blackberries; gooseberries; plums of the Wild Goose type; wild grapes and cultivated grapes of the slip-skin type, such as Concord; crabapples; such varieties of winter apples as Winesap and Ben Davis; quinces; and cranberries. In certain localities beach plums, barberries, chokecherries, or other wild fruits are converted into jelly. Also the juices of two fruits may be mixed to give jellies of delicious blended flavor or of particularly attractive color. Good combinations are currant and raspberry or gooseberry, apple and quince, grape and crabapple. Furthermore, by the addition of pectin extract, good jellies may be made from many other fruits until recently considered impossible to utilize in this way. Special directions accompany the commercial pectin extracts on the market and should be carefully followed. The directions given here deal only with fruits which should yield good jelly without the addition of pectin extract.

GUIDES TO SUCCESSFUL JELLY MAKING

Selection and preparation of the fruit

Select firm fruit slightly underripe. Overripe fruits are likely to give trouble in jelly making.

Wash all fruit thoroughly and discard any damaged parts. Wash berries quickly and with care. Leave currants on their stems, and leave the skins on grapes and plums. Remove stems and blossom ends from apples and quinces and cut the fruit into pieces, but do not remove cores or skins.

Prepare and make up into jelly small lots of fruit at a time, and carry the process through promptly. For example, cook up and extract juice from about 6 quarts of currants at a time, or 8 pounds of apples or grapes. If making a large quantity of jelly, start a second lot of fruit cooking as soon as the first finishes dripping in the jelly bag.

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Extracting the juice

In extracting the juice from fruit, add only the quantity of water specified. If too much water is used in extracting the juice, the excess water has to be cooked out after the sugar is added, and the jelly is likely to be below par in texture and flavor.

Quantity of water to fruit in extracting juice

To 1 pound prepared fruit

Apples	1 cup water, or water to cover
Crabapples	1 cup water, or water to cover
Blackberries)	(Firm fruit, 1/4 cup water
Black raspberries)	(Very soft fruit, no water
Cranberries	3 cups water
Currants	1/4 cup water, or no water
Gooseberries	1/4 cup water
Grapes, cultivated, such as Concord	1/4 cup water, or no water
Grapes, wild	1 cup water
Plums, Wild Goose type	1/2 cup water
Quinces	1 cup water, or water to cover
Red raspberries	No water

Cook the fruit in a broad, flat-bottomed kettle so as to get concentrated juice quickly and stir to prevent scorching. Crush soft fruits to start the flow of juice. Count time only after the fruit begins to boil. Berries, currants, and grapes need 5 to 10 minutes to cook soft; apples and quinces need about 25 to 30 minutes - all depending on the firmness of the fruit.

Pour the hot cooked fruit at once into a jelly bag of cotton flannel or of two or three thicknesses of good quality cheesecloth. Let the juice drip out; do not squeeze the bag. When the drops are few and far between press the bag lightly to start the flow again.

Some fruits, such as currants and crabapples, are so rich in jelly making power that two extractions of juice can be made from the fruit pomace. As soon as juice ceases to drip from the pomace after the first cooking, turn it back into the kettle, barely cover with water, boil again, and extract the juice exactly as the first time. Some jelly makers mix the fruit juice of the first and second extractions and make it into jelly. Others prefer to keep the two extractions separate and make jelly from each lot. If all the juice has good color and strong jelly making power there is little choice.

Combining sugar and juice

Use granulated white sugar. Repeated tests in the laboratories of this bureau show that results are exactly the same with refined cane sugar and refined beet sugar.

Make up 6 to 8 cups of juice into jelly at a time. With the sugar added this quantity of juice yields about 12 to 14 glasses of jelly, a convenient number to handle in one lot. Also this quantity of juice and sugar boils down quickly to the jelling stage, and short cooking retains the fresh fruit flavor and color and makes jelly of the best texture.

Measure sugar and juice accurately and use the following proportions:

Quantity of sugar to juice

To 1 cup extracted fruit juice

Apple	3/4 cup sugar
Crabapple	1 cup sugar
Blackberry	3/4 cup sugar
Black raspberry	3/4 cup sugar
Cranberry	3/4 cup sugar
Currant	1 cup sugar
Gooseberry	1 cup sugar
Grape, cultivated, such as Concord	3/4 to 1 cup sugar
Grape, wild	1 cup sugar
Plum, Wild Goose type	3/4 cup sugar
Quince	3/4 cup sugar
Red raspberry	3/4 cup sugar

If the following fruits are overripe, good jelly can still be made by adding 1 tablespoon of strained lemon juice to each cup of extracted fruit juice when combining with the sugar: Blackberries, black raspberries, Concord grapes, quinces, and red raspberries.

Boiling down for the jelly test

Heat the fruit juice and sugar quickly to boiling, again using a large flat-bottomed kettle that permits rapid evaporation. Stir only until the sugar is dissolved, no more.

Boil rapidly until the jelly test is reached. For this test, dip a large spoon into the boiling sirup, and lift up the spoon so that the sirup runs off the side. As the sirup cooks down it reaches a stage when it no longer runs off the spoon in a steady stream, but separates into two distinct lines of drops, which "sheet" together. Stop the cooking, as soon as the boiling sirup gives this "sheeting off" test.

Let the hot sirup stand in the kettle while lifting clean jelly glasses from boiling water. Then skim off the film from the hot jelly, and pour into the hot glasses carefully so that the jelly does not splash up or drip onto the rim.

Let the glasses of jelly stand until set - for 12 hours or longer.

Sealing and storing

When the jelly is firm and well set, pour melted paraffin over the top and rotate the glass in the hand so that the hot paraffin runs up to the rim to form a good seal. Cover and label with name of fruit and date of making, and store in a cool, dry place.

Utilizing the left-over pomace

The fruit pomace remaining after the juice has been extracted for jelly can oftentimes be made into fruit butter. Press the pomace through a fine sieve, add sugar and spice to taste, cook until thick, and stir constantly. Seal and store in sterilized jars.