

Strawberry Jam
By Melissa Knific
The New York Times/NYT Cooking

Total Time: about 1-1/2 hours

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes, plus 1 hour cooking

Yield: about 1 cup

"Sweet and ever-so-slightly tart, strawberry jam ranks among the top spreadable fruit flavors. When the pick-your-own season begins and supermarket shelves are abundant with the juicy, scarlet berry, it signals the start of summer, and it's an opportunity to get your jam on. Here, just three ingredients—strawberries, sugar and lemon juice—make a simple jam that's not overly sweet. However, it is crucial to have an instant-read thermometer on hand and to keep a watchful eye on the simmering temperature so the fruit's natural pectin can do its thickening magic. In the off-season, frozen berries are a perfectly suitable stand-in for fresh, since they're often picked at peak ripeness. This simple jam will last in the fridge for up to two weeks (for larger batches and a longer shelf life, consider canning it). Spread strawberry jam on crumpets, make an extra-special dessert, or, if you can't wait for it to cool, spoon it warm over some ice cream."

Ingredients

1-pound fresh strawberries, hulled and diced, or 12 to 14 ounces frozen strawberries (no need to thaw), diced (2½ to 3 cups diced)

⅔ cup granulated sugar (see Tip)

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Preparation

1. Combine strawberries, sugar and lemon juice in a medium pot. Stir until berries are completely coated in sugar. Using a potato masher, smash the berries 10 or so times to release some of their juices. Bring to a simmer over medium-high, then reduce to medium and simmer, uncovered, for 12 minutes. Stir occasionally and keep an instant-read thermometer handy; temperature should hover between 210 and 215 degrees. The mixture will foam quite a bit at first, but that will subside the longer it simmers, then the jam will thicken significantly.
2. Increase heat to medium-high, stirring frequently and scraping the bottom and sides of the pot until the jam reaches 218 to 220 degrees (but no hotter), 1 to 2 minutes. Turn off the heat and cool in the pot for 5 minutes. Spoon off any residual foam, if desired, then transfer jam to a glass canning jar (12 to 14 ounces), or similarly sized lidded glass vessel, and cool completely, uncovered. Use jam immediately, or screw on the lid and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. The jam will thicken when chilled. (Canning the jam will lengthen its shelf life)

"Tip - When it comes to jam, the amount of sugar used can vary depending on both the sweetness of the strawberries and personal preference. Use the ⅔ cup here as a guide: If the berries are freshly picked or deep red, they're likely full of natural sweetness, so feel free to decrease the sugar to ½ cup. Taste a berry and decide!"