

# Mixed Berry Jam

1 cup (8-9 oz) fresh **blackberries**

1 cup (8-9 oz) fresh **blueberries**

1 cup (8-9 oz) fresh **strawberries**

1 cup (8-9 oz) fresh **raspberries**

1 cup (3 cups + 5 tsp) **white granulated sugar** S

(¼ cup) **lemon juice** – freshly squeezed



## Instructions

### Sterilising the Jars:

- Sterilise the jar or jars you'll be using to store the jam. Choose glass jars with an airtight, metal lid and ensure they have been washed by hand in hot soapy water then rinsed well.

Check that the metal lids do not have rubber inserts – if they do, allow them to air dry, instead of placing in the oven. Preheat the oven to 130 Degrees C (270 F) and place the jars in the oven for 15-20 minutes.

Keep the jars warm.

### For the Mixed Berry Jam:

- Place two small saucers or plates in the freezer.
- Wash and thoroughly dry the berries. Cut the blackberries in half. Remove the stem from the strawberries and cut into quarters. The raspberries and blueberries can remain whole.

Add the berries, sugar and lemon juice to a large saucepan and mix well with a long-handled wooden spoon.

- Turn the heat on low and stir until the sugar dissolves. (This can take 5-8 minutes)

If sugar crystals get caught on the side of the saucepan, scrape down with a spatula.

- Once the sugar is dissolved, increase the heat to a rolling boil.

Boil for 15 minutes, stirring frequently. After 15 minutes, begin to check for the setting point. Your jam will likely take between 15-20 minutes, but it will depend on the width of your saucepan and how rapidly the jam is boiling.

- Turn off heat and spoon a little of the jam onto one of your chilled saucers.

Let it stand for 30 seconds to cool, and then run your finger through it. If it wrinkles, even slightly, it is ready. If it is still quite liquid, put it back on the heat and boil for a further 1-2 minutes, and retest until ready.

Alternatively, you could use a candy thermometer. Setting point is reached when the thermometer reaches 105 Degrees C (220 F).

- Skim any scum off the top of the jam with a spoon.
- Allow the jam to sit for 5 minutes to allow the fruit to disperse evenly.
- Carefully ladle your jam into your hot jars and put the lids on immediately. Allow the jam to cool completely. Wipe the jars to remove any spills, and store the jam in a cool, dark place.

## Notes

1. **Berries:** ensure your fruit is **freshly picked** and of **good quality**. Avoid fruit that is bruised or over-ripe. The berries contain pectin which aids in the jam setting. If your fruit is older, it will contain less pectin. I have used equal quantities of fruit, but if you had less raspberries and more blueberries etc., then that is fine. Good quality fruit that is frozen fresh and isn't overly icy can be used. It can be used from frozen. The cooking times will be similar – just test as per the recipe.
2. **Sugar:** Do not reduce the amount of sugar. Whilst the sugar sweetens the fruit it also acts as a preservative and helps the jam to set. If you reduce the sugar, your jam may not be thick enough or shelf-stable.
3. **Lemon juice:** not only balances the sweetness of the sugar, but it also contains acid and pectin, which help to set the jam.
4. **Sterilising the jars:** properly sterilising your jars is an essential process to remove bacteria that could cause your preserves to spoil.
5. **Chilled plates:** we use the chilled plates to quickly cool the jam when testing the setting point.
6. **Saucepan:** I choose a large saucepan that has enough height to enable the jam to boil vigorously. More surface area means the liquid will evaporate faster; having sufficient height means you can boil the jam at a higher heat and maintain the fresh flavour of the mixed berries. Avoid aluminium, copper or iron pans; the acid in the fruit may react with the pan, giving the jam a metallic taste.
7. **Wooden spoon:** do not use a metal spoon – it will become very hot. A long-handled wooden spoon is important to avoid being burnt by a splash from boiling jam.
8. **Setting point:** my jam reached its setting point about 18 minutes after it began to boil rapidly. Boiling time will vary depending on the size of your saucepan and the heat that you apply.

9. **Immersion blender:** if you prefer a smoother jam, carefully use an immersion blender, once you have taken the Mixed Berry Jam off the heat. The photos show the non-blended jam.
10. **Storage:** when the recipe is made according to instructions and the jars have been sterilised properly, the jam will be shelf-stable for up to a year when stored in a cool, dark place. A jar should be refrigerated after opening.