

Pie Fillings

The recipes for fruit pie fillings all use a modified food starch called Clear Jel®. This starch produces the correct thickening, even after the fillings are canned and baked. Other starches, such as cornstarch, break down and result in a runny filling. Clear Jel® must be used as the thickener in these recipes; there is no substitution. Do not use any other form of Clear Jel®, such as Instant Clear Jel®.

Clear Jel® is not currently available in traditional grocery stores. Obtain your Clear Jel® before assembling the fruit and other ingredients to make these pie fillings. In most areas, mail order is the only source. Several sources can be found on the internet. Clear Jel® may be mail ordered from Kitchen Krafts by calling 1-800-776-0575. Call for prices and shipping and handling costs. There are about 2 cups in 1 pound of Clear Jel®.

Because the variety of fruit may alter the flavor of the fruit pie, first process a trial quart and make a pie. Then adjust the sugar and spices in the recipe to suit your preferences. The amount of lemon juice should not be altered because it helps with the safety and storage stability of the fillings. Each canned quart makes one 8- to 9-inch pie. The processing times given are for altitudes of 0-1,000 feet. Add 5 minutes at altitudes of 1,001 to 3,000 feet.

Apple Pie Filling

Quality: Use firm, crisp apples. Stayman, Golden Delicious, Rome and other varieties of similar quality are suitable. If apples lack tartness, use an additional ¼ cup of lemon juice for each 6 quarts of slices.

Procedure: Wash, peel and core apples. Prepare slices ½-inch wide and place in 1 gallon of water containing 1 teaspoon or 3,000 mg ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) to prevent browning. Drain fruit. To blanch the fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain, but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar, Clear Jel® and cinnamon in a large kettle with water and apple juice. If desired, food coloring and nutmeg may be added. Stir and cook on medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained apple slices immediately and fill jars with mixture without delay, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel and adjust lids. Immediately process in a boiling water bath for 25 minutes for pints or quarts.

Apple Pie Filling

1 Quart	7 Quarts
3½ cups sliced apples	6 quarts apples
¾ cup + 2 tablespoons granulated sugar	5½ cups granulated sugar
¼ cup Clear Jel®	1½ cups Clear Jel®
½ cup cold water	2½ cups cold water
½ teaspoon cinnamon	1 tablespoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons bottled lemon juice	¾ cup bottled lemon juice
¾ cup apple juice	5 cups apple juice
⅛ teaspoon nutmeg (optional)	1 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)
1 drop yellow food coloring (optional)	7 drops yellow food coloring (optional)

Blueberry Pie Filling

Quality: Select fresh, ripe and firm blueberries. If frozen blueberries (unsweetened) are used, collect juice as the fruit thaws, and use it for part of the water specified in the recipe. Reduce Clear Jel® to ¼ cup for one quart and 1¾ cups for seven quarts.

Procedure: Wash and drain fresh blueberries. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain, but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar and Clear Jel in a large kettle. Stir. Add water and, if desired, food coloring. Cook on medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained berries immediately and fill jars with mixture without delay, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel and adjust lids. Immediately process in a boiling water bath for 30 minutes for pints or quarts.

Blueberry Pie Filling

1 Quart	7 Quarts
3½ cups blueberries	6 quarts blueberries
¾ cup + 2 tablespoons granulated sugar	6 cups granulated sugar
¼ cup + 1 tablespoon Clear Jel®	2¼ cups Clear Jel®
1 cup cold water	7 cups cold water
3½ teaspoons bottled lemon juice	½ cup bottled lemon juice
Optional: 3 drops blue food coloring and 1 drop red food coloring	Optional: 20 drops blue food coloring and 7 drops red food coloring

Cherry Pie Filling

Quality: Select fresh, very ripe and firm cherries. Frozen cherries (unsweetened) may be used. If sugar has been added, rinse it off while the fruit is still frozen. Use the thawed juice as part of the water in the recipe. Reduce Clear Jel® to ¼ cup for one quart filling and 1¾ cups for seven quarts.

Procedure: Rinse and pit fresh cherries. To prevent stem end browning, hold cherries in cold-water solution with 1 teaspoon or 3,000 mg ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) to 1 gallon of water. A commercial ascorbic acid mixture may be used as directed on the package. Drain. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a

time in 1 gallon boiling water. Boil each batch 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain, but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot.

Combine water, sugar, Clear Jel® and, if desired, cinnamon, almond extract and food coloring in a large saucepan. Stir mixture and cook over medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained cherries immediately and fill jars with mixture without delay, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel and adjust lids. Process immediately in a boiling water bath for 30 minutes for pints or quarts.

Cherry Pie Filling

1 Quart	7 Quarts
3½ cups cherries	6 quarts cherries
1 cup granulated sugar	7 cups granulated sugar
¼ cup + 1 tablespoon Clear Jel®	1¾ cups Clear Jel®
1½ cups cold water	9½ cups cold water
⅛ teaspoon cinnamon	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon bottled lemon juice	½ cup bottled lemon juice
¼ teaspoon almond extract (optional)	2 teaspoon almond extract (optional)
6 drops red food coloring (optional)	¼ teaspoon red food coloring (optional)

Peach Pie Filling

Quality: Select ripe but firm, fresh peaches. Red Haven, Redskin, Sun High and other varieties of similar quality are suitable.

Procedure: Peel peaches. To loosen skins, submerge peaches in boiling water for approximately 30 to 60 seconds, and then place in cold water for 20 seconds. Slip off skins and prepare slices ½-inch thick. To prevent browning, place slices in 1 gallon of water containing 1 teaspoon or 3,000 mg of ascorbic acid (crushed vitamin C tablets may be used). Drain. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch for 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain, but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot.

Combine water, sugar, Clear Jel® and, if desired, cinnamon and/or almond extract in a large kettle. Stir and cook over medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil sauce 1 minute more, stirring constantly. Fold in drained peach slices and continue to heat mixture for 3 minutes. Fill jars without delay, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles, wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel and adjust lids. Process immediately in a boiling water bath for 30 minutes for pints or quarts.

Peach Pie Filling

1 Quart	7 Quarts
3½ cups peaches	6 quarts peaches
1 cup granulated sugar	7 cups granulated sugar
¼ cup + 1 tablespoon Clear Jel®	2 cups plus 2 tablespoons Clear Jel®
¾ cup cold water	5¼ cups cold water
⅛ teaspoon cinnamon	1 teaspoon cinnamon
¼ cup bottled lemon juice	1¾ cups bottled lemon juice
⅛ teaspoon almond extract (optional)	1 teaspoon almond extract (optional)

Sources:

1. Reynolds, Susan and Paulette Williams. *So Easy to Preserve*. Bulletin 989. Cooperative Extension Service, the University of Georgia. Revised by Elizabeth Address and Judy Harrison (2006).
2. USDA (2009). *Complete Guide to Home Canning*. Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539.

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