

- Prep Time: 20 minutes
- Cook Time: 25 minutes
- Total Time: 45 minutes (plus cooling time)
- Yield: 4 half-pint (8 oz) jars (approx. 32 servings)
- Skill Level: Easy to Intermediate
- Heat Intensity: Low-Medium Cooking Intensity

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Ingredients

- 4 lbs (1.8 kg) Fresh Peaches (peeled, pitted, and finely diced or mashed; yields about 4 cups prepared fruit)
- 3 ½ cups (700g) Granulated Sugar
- 3 tbsp Fresh Lemon Juice (strained)
- 1 tbsp Lemon Zest (optional, for bright citrus contrast)
- 1 box (1.75 oz / 49g) Regular Fruit Pectin (e.g., Sure-Jell)
- ½ tsp Unsalted Butter (optional, to reduce surface foaming during boil)

Equipment Needed

- Large, heavy-bottomed stainless steel pot or Dutch oven
- Potato masher or immersion blender
- Wooden spoon or heat-resistant silicone spatula

- Jar lifter, funnel, and ladle
- 4 half-pint (8 oz) canning jars with new lids and bands
- Large stockpot for water bath canning (if preserving for long shelf life)

Step-by-Step Cooking Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Peaches

1. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Prepare a large bowl with ice water.
2. Cut a small “X” into the bottom skin of each peach. Submerge the peaches in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds until the skins begin to loosen.
3. Transfer peaches immediately to the ice bath using a slotted spoon. Once cool enough to handle, slip the skins off.
4. Pit and dice the peaches finely. For a chunkier jam, mash half of the fruit with a potato masher and leave the remaining pieces diced.

Step 2: Combine Fruit, Citrus, and Pectin

1. In a large heavy-bottomed pot, combine the prepared peaches, lemon juice, lemon zest, and fruit pectin. Add ½ teaspoon of butter to reduce foam.

2. Stir well to dissolve the pectin into the fruit mixture.

Step 3: Heat and Bring to First Boil

- Heat Setting: Medium-High Intensity

1. Set the burner to Medium-High intensity.
2. Stir constantly until the mixture comes to a full, rolling boil (a boil that cannot be stirred down).

Step 4: Add Sugar and Hard Boil

- Heat Setting: High Intensity

1. Once the full boil is achieved, dump in all 3 ½ cups of granulated sugar at once.
2. Stir continuously to ensure the sugar fully dissolves and does not scorch on the bottom of the pan.
3. Bring the mixture back to a hard, full rolling boil over High intensity heat.

4. Once the hard boil is reached, set a timer and boil vigorously for exactly 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Step 5: Test for the Set (Gel Point)

1. Remove the pot from heat.
2. Cold Plate Test: Place a small spoon of jam on a plate that has been chilled in the freezer for 5 minutes. Let it sit for 1 minute, then push the edge of the jam with your finger. If it wrinkles slightly and holds its shape, it is ready. If it runs, return the pot to Medium heat intensity and boil for an additional 1–2 minutes before re-testing.
3. Skim off any remaining surface foam using a spoon.

Step 6: Jarring and Storage Options

Option A: Refrigerator / Freezer Method (Quick)

1. Ladle the hot jam into clean jars, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of headspace at the top.
2. Allow jars to cool completely at room temperature (about 2 hours).
3. Cover with lids and transfer to the refrigerator. The jam will set as it chills.

- Shelf Life: Up to 3 weeks in the fridge, or up to 1 year in the freezer.

Option B: Water Bath Canning (Shelf-Stable)

1. Ladle hot jam into sterilized half-pint jars, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of headspace.
2. Wipe jar rims with a clean, damp cloth to remove sticky residue. Place lids flat and screw bands on until fingertip tight.
3. Submerge jars in a boiling water bath canner (water must cover lids by at least 1 inch).
4. Processing Intensity: Cover pot and process at a full rolling boil (High intensity) for 10 minutes (adjust time for altitude).
5. Turn off heat, remove lid, and let jars stand in the hot water for 5 minutes.
6. Transfer jars to a towel-lined counter and allow them to sit undisturbed for 12-24 hours until sealed (lids will ping).

- Shelf Life: Up to 1 year stored in a cool, dark pantry.

Flavor Variation Ideas

- Bourbon Vanilla Peach Jam: Stir in 2 tablespoons of good quality bourbon and 1 teaspoon of pure vanilla bean paste right after removing the jam from the heat.
- Spiced Peach Jam: Add ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon ground ginger, and a pinch of nutmeg along with the fruit pectin.
- Peach Jalapeño Jam: Add 1–2 finely minced jalapeños during Step 2 for a sweet-and-spicy condiment perfect for cream cheese spread or grilled pork chops.

Cooking Intensity & Timing Breakdown

Process Stage	Cooking Intensity	Duration	Primary Action
Blanching Peaches	High Boil	1 Minute	Softens skins for easy peeling
Initial Cooking	Medium-High	5–8 Minutes	Dissolves pectin with fruit and citrus
Sugar Integration	High Boil	1 Minute	Creates chemical gel network with pectin
Water Bath Canning	High Boil	10 Minutes	Seals jars for shelf stability

Nutritional Information

Servings per recipe: 32 (Serving Size: 1 tablespoon / 20g)

Nutrient	Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value*
Calories	45 kcal	—
Total Fat	0g	0%
Saturated Fat	0g	0%
Trans Fat	0g	—
Sodium	0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate	12g	4%
Dietary Fiber	0.5g	2%
Total Sugars	11g	—

Nutrient	Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value*
<i>Includes Added Sugars</i>	10g	20%
Protein	0.2g	0%
Vitamin C	1.5mg	2%
Potassium	35mg	1%