

# Peaches



These instructions can be used to preserve apricots and nectarines.

## Quantity

A bushel of peaches weighs 50 pounds and yields 19 to 25 quarts. An average of 17½ pounds makes a 7-quart canner load; 11 pounds makes 9 pints. An average of 1¼ pounds makes 1 pint of frozen product.

## Quantity

Choose ripe, mature fruit of ideal quality for eating fresh.

## Freezing

Freeze only up to 2 pounds of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day.

Select well-ripened fruit and handle carefully to avoid bruising. Sort, wash, and peel. *Note:* Peeling without a boiling-water dip gives a better product. Slice or halve if desired.

*Syrup pack:* Dissolve 2 cups of sugar in 3 cups of lukewarm water, mixing until clear, then chill before using. For a better quality product, add ½ teaspoon of crystalline ascorbic acid for each quart of syrup. Slice the fruit directly into the syrup in the container, starting with ½ cup of syrup to a pint container. Press the fruit down, add syrup to cover leaving head space, seal, and freeze.

*Sugar pack:* Before combining the peaches with sugar, treat with the following solution to prevent darkening:

### Nutrition per ½ -cup serving

	Syrup	Sugar	Unsweetened	Puree
Calories	230.0	101.0	37.0	146.0
Carbohydrate	59.0 g	26.0 g	9.5 g	37.5 g
Fat	0.0 g	0.0 g	0.0 g	0.0 g
Dietary fiber	1.4 g	1.4 g	1.4 g	1.8 g
Vitamin C*	52.0 mg	99.0 mg	380.0 mg	54.0 mg
Sodium	0.5 mg	0.2 mg	0.0 mg	0.2 mg

\*Vitamin C content is mostly due to the ascorbic acid crystals added to prevent browning. Some vitamin C may be lost in the liquid not consumed and with contact to the air. One teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals contains 3,000 milligrams of vitamin C.

¼ teaspoon of crystalline ascorbic acid and ¼ cup of cold water.

Dissolve the crystalline ascorbic acid in cold water and sprinkle over 1 quart (1⅓ lbs.) of fruit. Mix ⅔ cup of sugar with each quart of fruit. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Pack into containers leaving head space, seal, and freeze.

*Unsweetened pack:* Pack the peaches into containers. Cover with cold water, juice, or pectin syrup, containing 1 teaspoon of crystalline ascorbic acid for each quart leaving head space, seal, and freeze.

To make pectin syrup, combine 1 package regular powdered pectin in 1 cup water. Heat to boiling and boil for 1 minute. Add 1¾ cups cool water. Cool. Makes about 3 cups.

*Unsweetened Puree:* Coarsely crush peaches that are peeled and pitted. Press the peaches through a sieve or puree in a blender or food processor. (Heating pitted fruit for about 4 minutes in just enough water to prevent scorching makes them easier to puree.) For better quality, add ⅛ teaspoon of crystalline ascorbic acid to each quart of fruit. Pack into containers leaving head space, seal, and freeze.

To package, fill pint- or quart-size freezer bags or rigid freezer containers. Fill bags to a level of 3 to 4 inches from the tops, squeeze out the air, seal, and label. Before freezing, the bags may be inserted into reusable, rigid-plastic freezer containers for added protection against punctures and leakage.

## Canning

Dip the peaches in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds or until the skins loosen. Dip quickly in cold water and slip off the skins. Cut the peaches in half, remove the pits, and slice if desired. To prevent darkening, keep the peeled fruit in water containing 1 teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals or six 500-milligram vitamin C tablets (crushed) in 1 gallon of water.

Wash the jars. Prepare the lids according to the manufacturer's instructions. The peaches may be covered with your choice of water, apple or white grape juice, or, more commonly, with a very light, light, or medium syrup.

*To make a very light syrup for a canner load of quarts:* Mix ½ cup sugar in 1 quart water and heat to dissolve. To make a light syrup, mix 1 cup sugar in 1 quart water; to make a medium syrup, mix 1¾ cups sugar in 1 quart water.

*To make a hot pack:* In a large saucepan, place the drained fruit in the syrup, juice, or water, and bring to a boil. Fill the clean jars with hot fruit and the cooking liquid, leaving ½-inch head space.

*To make a raw pack:* Raw packs make poor quality peaches. Fill the jars with raw fruit, cut side down, and add hot water, juice, or syrup, leaving ½-inch head space. Wipe the sealing edges of the jars with a clean, damp paper towel. Add the lids and tighten the screw bands. You may process the jars in a boiling-water or pressure canner.

*To process in a boiling-water canner:* Preheat the canner filled halfway with water to 180°F for hot packs or

140°F for raw packs. Load the sealed jars onto the canner rack and lower with the handle, or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto the rack in the canner. Add water, if needed, to a level 1 inch above the jars and add the lid. When the water boils vigorously, lower the heat to maintain a gentle boil and process for the recommended time.

*To process in a pressure canner:* Place the jar rack, 2 inches of water, and the closed jars in the canner. Fasten the canner lid and heat the canner on a high setting. After the steam exhausts 10 minutes, add the weighted gauge or close the petcock to pressurize the canner. Start timing the process when the desired pressure is reached. Regulate heat to maintain uniform pressure. When processing is completed, remove the canner from the heat. Air-cool canner until it is fully depressurized. Then slowly remove the weighted gauge or open the petcock. Wait 2 minutes and unfasten and carefully remove the canner lid.

### After processing

After the processing is completed, remove the jars from the canner with a jar lifter and place them on a towel or rack. Do not retighten the screw bands. Air-cool the jars 12 to 24 hours. Remove the screw bands and check the lid seals. If the center of the lid is indented, wash, dry, label, and store the jar in a clean, cool, dark place. If the lid is unsealed, examine and replace the jar if defective, use a new lid, and reprocess as before. Wash the screw bands and store separately.

Fruits are best if consumed within a year and safe as long as the lids remain vacuum sealed.

### Recommended process times in a boiling-water canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Processing time in minutes at different altitudes (in feet)		
		0-1,000	1,001-3,000	3,001-6,000
Hot	Pints	20	25	30
	Quarts	25	30	35
Raw	Pints	25	30	35
	Quarts	30	35	40

### Recommended process times in a pressure canner

Style of pack	Jar size	Process time (min.)	Canner gauge pressure for different altitudes (in feet)			
			Dial gauge (lbs.)		Weighted gauge (lbs.)	
			0-2,000	2,001-4,000	0-1,000	Above 1,000
Hot and raw	Pints or quarts	10	6	7	5	10

## Nutrition per ½-cup serving

	Medium syrup	Very light syrup	In apple juice	In water
<b>Calories</b>	113.0	78.0	84.0	61.0
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	29.0 g	20.0 g	21.6 g	16.0 g
<b>Fat</b>	0.0 g	0.0 g	0.0 g	0.0 g
<b>Sodium</b>	0.1 mg	0.0 mg	1.5 g	0.0 mg
<b>Vitamin C</b>	9.0 mg	9.0 mg	10.0 mg	9.0 mg
<b>Dietary fiber</b>	2.3 g	2.3 g	2.3 mg	2.3 mg

## Peach Pie Filling

### General

Clear Jel is a starch modified to produce excellent sauce consistency even after the fillings are canned and baked. Other available household starches break down, causing a runny sauce consistency when used in these pie fillings. Clear Jel is available from bulk food stores or on the Internet.

Because the variety of fruit may alter the flavor of the fruit pie, you should first make a single quart of filling, make a pie with it, and serve it. Then adjust the sugar and spices in the recipe to suit your personal preference. The amount of lemon juice should not be altered because it aids in ensuring the safety and storage stability of the fillings. If the filling is too tart, add more sugar to taste.

Each canned quart of pie filling makes one 8- to 9-inch pie. The fillings may be used as toppings on desserts or pastries.

### Ingredients

Ingredient	Quantities of ingredients needed for:	
	1 quart	7 quarts
<b>Fresh sliced peaches</b>	3½ cups	6 quarts
<b>Granulated sugar</b>	1 cup	7 cups
<b>Clear Jel</b>	¼ cup + 1 tbsp.	2 cups + 3 tbsp.
<b>Cold water</b>	¾ cup	5¼ cups
<b>Cinnamon (optional)</b>	⅛ tsp.	1 tsp.
<b>Almond extract (optional)</b>	⅛ tsp.	1 tsp.
<b>Bottled lemon juice</b>	¼ cup	1¾ cups

### Quality

Choose ripe, native fruit of ideal quality for eating fresh or cooking. Haven Series, Redskin, Sun High, and other varieties of similar quality are suitable.

## Procedure

Peel the peaches. To loosen the skins, submerge the peaches in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds, then place them in cold water for 20 seconds. Slip off the skins and slice into ½-inch wide slices. Place the slices in water containing one teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals or six 500-milligram vitamin C tablets (crushed) in one gallon of water to prevent browning. 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 the heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot.

Combine the sugar, Clear Jel, water, and, if desired, cinnamon or almond extract in a large kettle. Stir and cook on medium high heat until the mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add the lemon juice and boil the sauce one minute more, stirring constantly. Fold in the drained peach slices and continue to heat for 3 minutes, then fill the jars with the mixture leaving 1-inch head space, and process without delay. See the next paragraph for processing instructions.

*To process in a boiling-water canner:* Preheat the canner half filled with water to 180°F. Load the closed jars into the canner rack and lower with the handles, or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto the rack in canner. Add water, if needed, to a level 1 inch above the jars and cover. When the water boils vigorously, reduce the heat to maintain a gentle boil and process for the recommended time: for pints or quarts, 30 minutes at altitudes of 0 to 1,000 feet, 35 minutes at altitudes of 1,001 to 3,000 feet, and 40 minutes at altitudes of 3,001 to 6,000 feet.

## Nutrition

	Per quart	½ cup	⅛ slice
		pie filling	double-crust pie
<b>Calories</b>	1206.0	151.0	362.0
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	315.0 g	39.0 g	58.0 g
<b>Fat</b>	0.0 g	0.0 g	14.0 g
<b>Sodium</b>	115.0 mg	14.0 g	231.0 mg
<b>Vitamin C</b>	54.0 mg	7.0 mg	7.0 mg
<b>Dietary fiber</b>	55.0 g	6.8 g	7.6 g

## Peach Jam

*Yield:* 8 half-pint jars  
2 quarts crushed, peeled peaches  
½ cup water  
6 cups sugar

### Procedure

Sterilize the canning jars. Combine the peaches and water; cook gently for 10 minutes. Add the sugar; slowly bring to a boil, stirring occasionally until the sugar dissolves. Cook rapidly until thick, about 15 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Pour the hot jam into the hot jars, leaving ¼-inch head space. Wipe the jar rims and adjust the lids.

Process 5 minutes in a boiling-water bath at altitude 0 to 1,000 feet; 10 minutes at 1,001 to 6,000 feet.

*Note:* For spiced peach jam, tie the following ingredients in a cheesecloth and add to the jam during cooking:

1 teaspoon whole cloves  
1 stick cinnamon (3-inch piece)  
½ teaspoon whole allspice

Remove the spice bag before pouring the jam into the hot jars. Process as directed for peach jam.

### Nutrition per tablespoon

	Peach Jam	Peach Butter
<b>Calories</b>	42.0	24.8
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	11.0 g	6.35 g
<b>Fat</b>	0.0 g	0.0 g
<b>Vitamin C</b>	1.0 mg	0.78 mg
<b>Dietary fiber</b>	0.2 g	0.17 g

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Adapted from *Preserving Peaches* by Karen P. Penner, Ph.D., Foods and Nutrition, and Jeanne Dray, Extension Assistant, Foods and Nutrition, April 1995; *Complete Guide to Home Canning*, USDA AIB No. 539, 2009, and *So Easy to Preserve*, 5th ed., The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

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Karen Blakeslee, et al., *Preserving Peaches*, Kansas State University, October 2010.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

MF-1182

October 2010

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## Peach Butter

4 to 4 ½ pounds peaches (about 18 medium)

4 cups sugar

*To Prepare Pulp:* Wash and blanch peaches. Put peaches in cold water. Peel, pit and slice peaches. Combine peaches and ½ cup water in a large saucepot. Simmer until peaches are soft. Puree using a food processor or food mill, being careful not to liquefy. Measure 2 quarts peach pulp.

*To Make Butter:* Combine peach pulp and sugar in a large saucepot. Cook until thick enough to round up on a spoon. As mixture thickens, stir frequently to prevent sticking. Ladle hot butter into hot jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust two-piece caps. Process in a boiling-water canner 10 minutes at altitude 0 to 1,000 feet; 15 minutes at altitude 1,001 to 3,000 feet; or 20 minutes at altitude 3,001 to 6,000 feet.

*Recipe Variation:* For spiced peach butter add ½ to 1 teaspoon of ginger, nutmeg and cinnamon or any combination of these spices when adding sugar.

## Problems and Solutions

### 1. Why do peach pieces float to the top of jam?

The fruit was either not ripe enough, not crushed into small pieces, not cooked long enough, or not packed properly into the jars.

### 2. What causes canned peaches to float?

The fruit is lighter than the sugar syrup. Use firm, ripe fruit. Use the hot pack method to remove air from the fruit. Use a light or medium syrup instead of a heavy syrup. Pack fruit as close as possible and release trapped air before applying the lid.