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How to Make Homemade Blueberry Syrup - Easily!



Making and canning your own blueberry syrup is so easy. And this blueberry syrup is incredible. Even if you are a fan of strawberry, triple-berry, blackberry, or whatever, and don't like fresh blueberries, you MUST try this! Here's how to do it, in 12 simple steps and completely illustrated. Any variations will be spelled out in the directions inside the pectin. For more information about blueberries, see [Blueberry Picking Tips](#) . I've got some other pages for specific types of syrup and butters, too.

Ingredients

- **Blueberries** - 6½ to 7 cups of fresh or frozen blueberries OR other berries of your choice (examples: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries).
- **Lemon juice** - either fresh squeezed or bottled. 2 tablespoons.
- **Sugar** - 7 cups of dry, granulated (table) sugar. It is possible to make low-sugar, fruit juice-sweetened, or Splenda-sweetened syrup; I'll point out the differences below.

Equipment

- **At least 1 large pot**; I prefer 16 to 20 quart Teflon lined pots for easy cleanup.
- **Large spoons and ladles**
- **1 Canner** (a huge pot to sterilize the jars after filling (about \$30 to \$35 at mall kitchen stores, sometimes at big box stores and grocery stores.). Note: [we sell canners and supplies here, too - at excellent prices](#) - and it helps support this web site!
- **Ball jars** (Grocery stores, like Publix, Kroger, Safeway carry them, as do some big box stores - about \$7 per dozen 8 ounce jars including the lids and rings)
- **Lids** - thin, flat, round metal lids with a gum binder that seals them against the top of the jar. They may only be used once.
- **Rings** - metal bands that secure the lids to the jars. They may be reused many times.

- **Jar funnel** (\$2 at Target, other big box stores, and often grocery stores; and available online - see this page) or order it as part of the kit with the jar grabber.
- **Jar grabber** (to pick up the hot jars)- Big box stores and grocery stores sometimes carry them; and it is available online - see this page. It's a tremendously useful to put jars in the canner and take the hot jars out (without scalding yourself!). The kit sold below has everything you need, and at a pretty good price

Optional stuff:



- **Foley Food Mill** (\$25) - not necessary; useful if you want to remove seeds (from blackberries) or [make applesauce](#).
- **Lid lifter** (has a magnet to pick the lids out of the boiling water where you sterilize them. (\$2 at big box stores or it comes in the kit at left)

Blueberry Syrup-making Directions

This example shows you how to make blueberry (or any berry) syrup! The yield from this recipe is about 9 or 10 eight-ounce jars (which is the same as 5 pints).

Step 1 - Pick the blueberries! (or buy them already picked)



It's fun to go pick your own and you can obviously get better quality ones!

I prefer to grow my own; which is really easy - but that does take some space and time.

As mentioned in the Ingredients section; you may use frozen blueberries (those without syrup or added sugar); which is especially useful if you want to make some syrup in December to give away at Christmas!

At left are blueberries (in my yard, actually; they make a great hedge or landscaping bush) almost ripe! If you want to pick your own, here is a list and links to the [pick your own farms](#).

Step 2 - How much fruit?

Syrup can be made in any size batch, but the 6 ½ cups of fresh or frozen berries at a time is normal and manageable - it is difficult to get even heating on larger batches) You can scale the recipe down, if desired, to make any smaller amount.



Step 3 - Wash the jars and lids

Now's a good time to get the jars ready, so you won't be rushed later. The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sterilize" cycle, the water bath processing will sterilize them as well as the contents! If you don't have a dishwasher with a sterilize cycle, you can wash the containers in hot, soapy water and rinse, then sterilize the jars by boiling them 10 minutes, and keep the jars in hot water until they are used.



NOTE: If unsterilized jars are used, the product should be processed for 5 more minutes. However, since this additional processing can result in a poor set (runny syrup), it's better to sterilize the jars.

Put the lids into a pan of hot, but not quite boiling water (that's what the manufacturer's recommend) for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" to pull them out.

Leave the jars in the dishwasher on "heated dry" until you are ready to use them. Keeping them hot will prevent the jars from breaking when you fill them with the hot syrup.

Lids: put the lids into a pan of boiling water for at least several minutes; to soften up the gummed surface and clean the lids. I just leave them in there, with the heat on very low, until I need them!

Step 4 - Wash the berries and sort!



I'm sure you can figure out how to wash the fruit in a colander of plain cold water.

Then you need to pick out and remove any bits of stems, leaves and soft or mushy berries. It is easiest to do this in a large bowl of water and gently run your hands

through the berries as they float. With your fingers slightly apart, you will easily feel any soft or mushy berries get caught in your fingers.



Then just drain off the water!

Step 5 - Crush the berries



You can go wild, be a conquering Genghis Khan crushing the peasants.. watch them flee. Well, if they're not fleeing, the berries sure do manage to roll everywhere. You won't find them until the next time you clean behind your refrigerator!

Anyway, to crush them, you can either do one layer at a time in a pan or bowl, using a potato masher..

OR you can be lazy like me and use the slice mode on your food processor. If you have a juicer, you can use that instead!





Step 6 - Measure out the sweetener

You can make syrup with sugar, fruit juice or artificial sweetener, depending upon your needs.

Type of syrup	Sweetener
regular	7 cups of sugar
low sugar	4.5 cups of sugar
lower sugar	2 cups sugar and 2 cups of Splenda
no sugar	4 cups of Splenda
natural	3 cups frozen concentrated fruit juice (grape, peach, apple or mixed)

Step 7 - Mix the blueberries with the lemon juice and cook to a full boil

Add the lemon juice and heat the blueberries in a big pot to boiling and simmer until soft (5 to 10 minutes).

Step 8 - Strain the cooked berries

Strain the hot berries through a colander (I use a sieve that fits just inside a large pot, or for more pulp bits, use a Foley Food Mill) and let them drain until they are cool enough to handle.



Step 9 - Strain again through cheesecloth



If you want a more clarified (clear) syrup, strain the collected juice through a double layer of cheesecloth OR a jelly bag. Discard the dry pulp. The yield of the pressed juice should be about 4 ½ to 5 cups. You tend to get a better yield when you use a juicer; they are more efficient.

Step 10 - Add the sweetener

Combine the juice with 7 cups of sugar (or your other choice and quantity of sweetener) in a large saucepan, bring it to boiling, and simmer for 1 minute. Remove from heat and skim off any foam.

NOTE: To make a syrup with whole fruit pieces, save 1 or 2 cups of the fresh or frozen fruit, combine these with the sugar, and simmer as in making syrup without fruit pieces.



Step 11 - Fill the jars and put the lid and rings on



Fill them to within ¼ to ½ inch of the top, wipe any spilled syrup off the top, seat the lid and tighten the ring around them. Then put them into the boiling water canner!

This is where the jar tongs and lid lifter come in really handy!





Step 12 - Process the jars in the boiling water bath

Keep the jars covered with at least 2 inches of water. Keep the water boiling. In general, boil them for 10 to 15 minutes. I say "in general" because it depends upon the jar size and altitude. You have to process (boil) them longer at higher altitudes than sea level, or if you use larger jars, or if you did not sterilize the jars and lids right before using them. See the table below:



Recommended Process Times in a Boiling-Water Canner for Hot Pack Berry Syrups

	Process times (in minutes) for altitudes of		
Jar size	0-1,000 ft.	1,001 -6,000 ft.	Over 6,000 ft
Half-pints	10 min	15 min	20 min
Pints	10 min	15 min	20 min

Step 13 - Remove and cool the jars - Done!

Lift the jars out of the water and let them cool without touching or bumping them in a draft-free place (usually takes overnight) You can then remove the rings if you like. Once the jars are cool, you can check that they are sealed verifying that the lid has been sucked down. Just press in the center, gently, with your finger. If it pops up and down (often making a popping sound), it is not sealed. If you put the jar in the refrigerator right away, you can still use it. Some people replace the lid and reprocess the jar, then that's a bit iffy. If you heat the contents back up, re-jar them (with a new lid) and the full time in the canner, it's usually ok.

Once cooled, they're ready to store. I find they last up to 12 months. But after about 6 to 8 months, they get darker in color and start to get runny. They still are safe to eat, but the flavor and texture aren't as good. So eat them in the first 6 months after you prepare them!



Other Equipment:

From left to right:

1. Jar lifting tongs to pick up hot jars
2. Lid lifter - to remove lids from the pot of boiling water
3. Lid - disposable - you may only use them once
4. Ring - holds the lids on the jar until after the jars cool - then you don't need them
5. Canning jar funnel - to fill the jars



You can get all of the tools in a kit here:

