

Testing for Gel Set

You can't rely on what the liquid in your pot looks like to determine if it will set properly. Because the liquid is being heated, it will never look like jelly or jam in the pot - no matter how long you wait! The best way to judge how it will set is to test it. There are three common ways to test for gel set.

Because pectin can be over-boiled, remove your pot from the heat while testing for gel set.

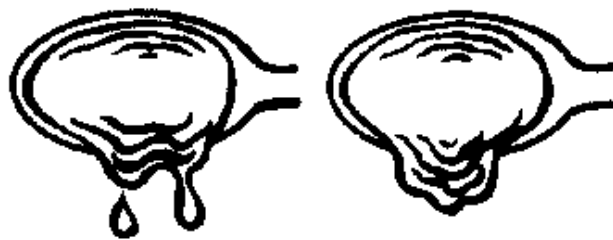
1. Chilled Plate Test

Place a small plate in the freezer. Pour a spoonful of jelly on the plate and cool for 1 minute in freezer. Take the plate out of the freezer and run your finger through the center of the liquid. If it wrinkles and you can push it around, it is ready. If it remains liquidy, continue to boil.



2. Spoon Test

Dip a cold metal spoon into the mixture. Hold it above the pot, out of the steam. Turn the spoon so that the liquid drips off the spoon. Observe the drips. If the liquid drips off the spoon one or two drops at a time, it is not ready. When the drips flow together and drop off the side of the spoon in a liquidy sheet, the mix is ready.



3. Temperature Test

Cook your jam or jelly unit it reaches a temperature of 105°C/220°F. Insert a candy thermometer vertically into the mixture being sure the tip of the thermometer does not touch the pot. If you're confident of your pectin, acid, sugar and fruit mix, you're jam and jelly will be ready once you reach this temperature. If you're uncertain, combine this test with either the chilled plate or spoon test.