Canned Apple Pie Filling

Pie filling can be used to bake a pie OR you can use it as a dessert topping.

One quart size jar will fill an 8 or 9” pie crust
Notes for this recipe:

1) You can make adjustments to this recipe:

For pie filling, you can use any baking apple you wish. Just make sure they are firm and crisp. I like to use Golden Delicious, Granny Smith or Jonathan.

Based on the apples you choose, you can adjust the sugar and spices to your personal preferences.

Yep - You can adjust the sugar and spices in this recipe! That’s because in this recipe, they are only there for flavor.

The lemon juice is there for color preservation and acidity safety. Bottled lemon juice is called out because it has a consistent acidity level.

2) Clear Jel:

This recipe calls for a special ingredient called Clear Jel, that can really take this pie filling to the next level.

Clear Jel is a powdered modified food starch that is used in canning as a thickener. It can be difficult to find sometimes, but well worth the effort of tracking it down. (I order mine from www.kitchenkrafts.com)
Canners use Clear Jel instead of traditional thickeners like cornstarch, tapioca, flour or arrowroot because during the canning process, those traditional thickeners either gum up or break down. Using traditional thickeners before processing, will result in a runny pie at baking time. So Clear Jel is used instead.

However, if you can’t find Clear Jel, you can still make this recipe. Just don’t use any thickener at all!

Then, when you actually made the pie from the jar, add your traditional thickener at that time (such as cornstarch). You may get a few small lumps, but it is better than a runny pie.

3) Ascorbic Acid:
Another special ingredient I use is ascorbic acid. It is actually powdered vitamin C and is used to prevent browning or discoloration of the apples.

Yes you can just use lemon juice and it will work. But ascorbic acid has been proven to work much better. It is a very common ingredient in canning and should be easy to find at the supermarket in the canning section or wherever canning supplies are sold.

If using ascorbic acid, follow the manufacturer’s instructions. This usually means dissolving some of the powder in water and soaking the fruit for a few minutes before processing.
Make a Sample Jar:

I highly recommend that you make one sample jar of pie filling first to verify your spices and sugar before making a huge batch.

Each apple variety has a different sweetness level. You don’t want to go to all the trouble of canning only to discover that the finished batch has too much or too little sugar. The sugar called out in this recipe is what I use for sweet apples. If you are using very tart apples you may need more sugar.

But keep in mind that you can always add more sugar and spices just before baking, but you can’t take out. So, adjust carefully.

Use quart size jars for this recipe. Each quart will make one 8-9 inch pie. The ingredients below are for a 1-quart sample jar or a full batch of 7 quarts.

Ingredients for 1 Sample Quart:

3 ½ cups sliced fresh apples
Ascorbic acid (as needed)
½ cup sugar
¼ cup Clear Jel
¾ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. allspice
½ cup cold water
¾ cup unsweetened apple juice
2 Tbsp. bottled lemon juice
Ingredients for 7 Quarts:
6 quarts sliced fresh apples
Ascorbic acid (as needed)
3 cups sugar
1 ½ cups Clear Jel
4 ½ tsp. cinnamon
1 ½ tsp. allspice
2 ½ cups water
5 cups unsweetened apple juice
¾ cup bottled lemon juice

Directions:
1) Wash, peel and core the apples. Then slice them and measure for your recipe.

2) Mix ascorbic acid with water according to manufacturer’s instructions and soak sliced apples while you bring a stockpot of water to a boil.

3) Blanch the apple slices, in small batches, in the boil water for one minute. (This kills the enzyme that causes soft apples in the jar.)

4) Drain and set aside.

5) In a large stockpot, combine sugar, Clear Jel, spices, water and apple juice. Heat and stir until mixture begins to thicken and bubble.
6) Continue to stir and add lemon juice. Boil 1 minute.

7) Fold in drained apple slices and stir to heat through.

8) Turn off heat, and immediately fill hot canning jars with mixture, leaving a 1-inch headspace. Run a plastic knife or rubber spatula around the inside edges of jar to remove any air bubbles. Add more if necessary to maintain the 1-inch headspace.

9) Use a damp paper towel to wipe off rims of the jars. Add hot lids and rings and tighten to just finger tight.

10) Process immediately in a water bath for 25 minutes if you are below 1000 ft altitude. Process 30 minutes for 1,001-3,000 ft. Process 35 minutes for 3,001-6,000 ft.

Each quart jar will make one 8-9 inch pie. You can also use the pie filling as dessert topping or in pastries.

**To Bake a Pie From Pie Filling:**

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Pour 1 quart jar into a small pie crust. Add a crumb topping or a crust dough top. Bake for 10 minutes in the 425 degree oven. Turn down the heat. And cook at 375 degrees F for another 40-45 minutes or until golden brown and done.
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...Well now that we got THAT out of the way, let's go make some apple pie filling!