

Why Blackberries and Apples Are Not Berries

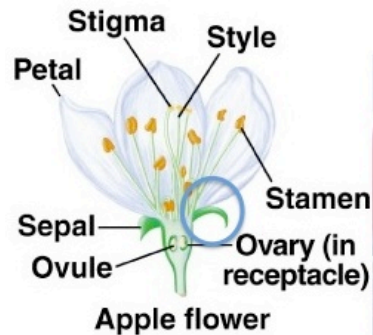
Of the strawberry, blackberry and raspberry, only the latter comes close to being a berry. The first two aren't even fleshy fruits; the tomato, which many still regard as a vegetable, is a pure berry, and lemons are modified berries.

Here's why. There are five types of fleshy fruits.

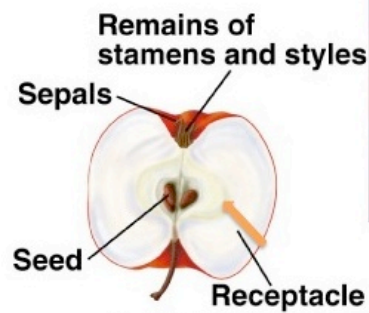
(1) In the **pome**, which as the name suggests includes the apple, pear and less popular hawthorn, the receptacle or floral tube becomes the edible part, and it surrounds the ovary, that shell around the seeds.

(2) In the **drupe** (peaches, plums, cherries) we're eating the outer wall of the ovary. The inner wall is stony (the pit) and it contains the seed, usually laced with a cyanide -related compound.

(3) In the **pure berry**, the entire ovary becomes fleshy, and it can have one to many seeds. Examples include grapes, tomatoes, eggplants, kiwis and persimmons (starry cross-section is pictured). The raspberry is an aggregate of berries because it's a fusion of many ovaries.



Apple flower



Apple fruit



(4) The **pepo**, an **accessory berry**, has its receptacle and ovary wall fusing to make the hard rind. We're basically eating the rest of the ex-ovary. Examples include cantaloupes, cucumbers and squash.

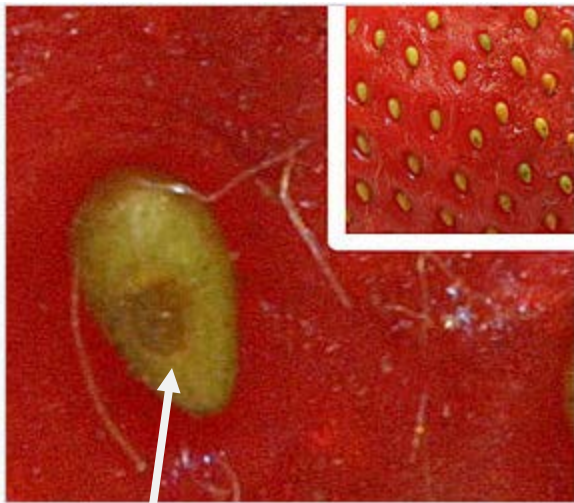


(5) Citrus fruits such as lemon and oranges are **hesperidia** or

modified berries because the ovary wall becomes the rind, and again we're eating the rest of what was the ovary.



The strawberry is not a berry, nor is most of it a fleshy fruit. The fleshy, edible part comes from the receptacle of the flower, and the botanical fruits are miniature and surround the seeds. The blackberry is also not a berry and falls in the same category as the strawberry.



That's the fruit!

Now that we're done, you can bury all these berry-facts, and hopefully they will germinate into fruit, especially since you won't find any at the Bonanza grocery store. My Mom bought out their whole stock and brought it over for Christmas.