



Sweet Success

12 Irresistible Candy Recipes
to Make at Home

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01



Creamy Peanut Butter Fudge

This no-bake fudge is incredibly easy to make and always a crowd-pleaser.



Yields

Approx. 24 servings



Prep time

15 minutes



Cool time

2 hours

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 2 cups creamy peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 (16-ounce) package powdered sugar

Equipment:

- 8x8-inch square baking dish
- Parchment paper
- Large saucepan
- Whisk

Instructions:

1. Line an 8×8-inch baking dish with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on the sides for easy lifting. Set aside.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter.
3. Add the peanut butter to the melted butter and stir until smooth and well combined. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in the vanilla extract.
5. Gradually add the powdered sugar, one cup at a time, whisking vigorously until fully incorporated and the mixture is thick and smooth. It will be very stiff.
6. Press the fudge mixture evenly into the prepared baking dish.
7. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or until firm.
8. Once firm, use the parchment paper overhang to lift the fudge out of the pan. Cut into squares and serve. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- Lasts up to 2 weeks.

02



Old-Fashioned Hard Candies

The candy-shop classic you can reinvent at home with any flavor or color you like!



Yields

Approx. 1 pound



Prep time

10 minutes



Cook time

15–20 minutes



Cool time

30–60 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2/3 cup light corn syrup
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon flavored extract (e.g., peppermint, lemon, cherry, cinnamon)
- Food coloring (optional)
- Powdered sugar for dusting (optional, prevents sticking)

Equipment:

- Heavy-bottomed saucepan (3–quart minimum)
- Candy thermometer
- Silicone baking mat or buttered baking sheet
- Small saucepan or heat-proof bowl for flavoring
- Potholders/heat-resistant gloves

Instructions:

1. Prepare your surface: Lightly dust a silicone baking mat or buttered baking sheet with powdered sugar (this helps prevent sticking).
2. In the heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup, and water. Stir gently over medium heat until the sugar dissolves. Avoid splashing sugar crystals onto the sides of the pan. If crystals form, brush them down with a wet pastry brush.
3. Insert your candy thermometer. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat without stirring.
4. Continue to boil until the mixture reaches 300°F (149°C), also known as the "hard crack" stage. This can take 15–20 minutes.
5. Immediately remove the saucepan from the heat. Carefully stir in the flavored extract and a few drops of food coloring, if using. Be cautious, as the mixture will be very hot and may bubble vigorously.
6. Carefully pour the hot candy mixture onto your prepared silicone mat or buttered baking sheet.
7. Allow the candy to cool completely and harden, which will take 30–60 minutes.
8. Once completely cool and hard, break the candy into small, irregular pieces using a metal spatula, the back of a spoon, or by gently tapping it with a mallet (wrapped in a clean towel).
9. Optionally, you can dust the broken pieces lightly with powdered sugar to prevent sticking.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

03



Chewy Caramel Candies

These buttery, soft caramels are a classic for a reason!



Yields

Approx. 60–70 pieces



Prep time

15 minutes



Cook time

20–30 minutes



Cool time

2–3 hours

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Equipment:

- 9×9-inch square baking dish
- Parchment paper
- Heavy-bottomed 3-quart saucepan
- Candy thermometer

Instructions:

1. Line a 9×9-inch baking dish with parchment paper, allowing an overhang on the sides. Lightly butter the parchment paper.
2. In the heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine butter, corn syrup, sugar, sweetened condensed milk, and salt.
3. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the sugar dissolves and the butter melts.
4. Attach a candy thermometer to the side of the pan, making sure it doesn't touch the bottom.
5. Continue to cook, stirring frequently (especially as it thickens), until the mixture reaches 245°F (118°C), or the "firm ball" stage. This will take about 20–30 minutes. It's crucial to stir to prevent scorching.
6. Immediately remove the pan from the heat and stir in the vanilla extract.
7. Pour the hot caramel into the prepared baking dish. Do not scrape the bottom of the pan as any crystallized sugar could make the caramel gritty.
8. Let cool completely at room temperature for 2–3 hours, or until firm enough to cut. Do not refrigerate, as this can make the caramel too hard.
9. Once cool, use the parchment paper to lift the caramel from the pan. Using a sharp, buttered knife or kitchen shears, cut into 1-inch squares.
10. Wrap each caramel individually in wax paper or cellophane wrappers to prevent sticking.

Storage:

- Store at room temperature in an airtight container.

04



Chocolate Covered Pretzels

Simple, versatile, and always a hit!



Yields

Varies
(depends on pretzel size)



Prep time

15 minutes



Cool time

15–30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 (12-ounce) package chocolate melting wafers or chocolate chips (milk, dark, or white chocolate)
- 1 (16-ounce) bag pretzel rods or mini pretzel twists
- Optional toppings: sprinkles, chopped nuts, sea salt, contrasting chocolate for drizzling

Equipment:

- Microwave-safe bowl or double boiler
- Parchment paper-lined baking sheet
- Spatula or spoon

Instructions:

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Melt the chocolate: If using melting wafers, follow package directions. If using chocolate chips, place them in a microwave-safe bowl and heat in 30-second intervals, stirring after each, until smooth and fully melted. Alternatively, melt in a double boiler over simmering water, stirring until smooth.
3. Dip the pretzels:
 - A. **For pretzel rods:** Hold a rod and dip it into the melted chocolate, leaving about 1–2 inches plain at the top for a handle. Use a spoon or spatula to help coat evenly, if needed.
 - B. **For pretzel twists:** Drop a few pretzels into the chocolate, then use a fork to lift them out, letting excess chocolate drip off.
4. Place the dipped pretzels onto the parchment-lined baking sheet.
5. If adding toppings, sprinkle them on immediately while the chocolate is still wet.
6. If drizzling with a contrasting chocolate, let the first layer of chocolate set slightly in the refrigerator for 5–10 minutes, then melt the second chocolate and drizzle over the pretzels.
7. Refrigerate for 15–30 minutes, or until the chocolate is completely set.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

05



Gummy Bears (or Worms!)

Make your own chewy, fruity gummies with this fun recipe.



Yields

Approx. 100–150
small gummies



Prep time

10 minutes



Cook time

5 minutes



Cool time

2 hours

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup cold water
- 2 tablespoons unflavored gelatin (approx. two packets)
- 1 (3-ounce) package flavored gelatin (e.g., Jell-O – cherry, lime, lemon, orange)
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup (optional, for extra chewiness and shine)
- 1/2 teaspoon citric acid (optional, for sour flavor and to prevent stickiness)

Equipment:

- Gummy bear (or worm) silicone molds
- Small saucepan
- Whisk
- Dropper or small squeeze bottle (optional, for filling molds)

Instructions:

1. In the small saucepan, pour the cold water. Sprinkle the unflavored gelatin over the water and let it "bloom" for 5 minutes. This softens the gelatin.
2. Add the flavored gelatin powder and light corn syrup (if using) to the saucepan.
3. Heat the mixture over low heat, stirring constantly, until all the gelatin is dissolved and the mixture is smooth. Do not let it boil.
4. Remove from heat. Stir in the citric acid (if using).
5. Carefully pour the mixture into the gummy bear molds. A dropper or small squeeze bottle can make this much easier and neater.
6. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or until the gummies are firm and set.
7. Once set, carefully pop the gummies out of the molds.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.
- For the best texture, let them sit out at room temperature for about 30 minutes before serving.

06



Salted Caramel Chocolates

Combine homemade caramel with a decadent chocolate shell and a sprinkle of sea salt.



Yields
Approx. 40 pieces



Prep time
30 minutes



Cook time
20–30 minutes
(for caramel)



Cool time
2–3 hours (for caramel)
+ 30 minutes (after coating)

Ingredients:

- **For the Caramel:**
 - Follow the "Chewy Caramel Candies" recipe (Recipe #3). You'll need about 1/2 of that batch for this recipe, or make a full batch and save some for later!
 - 1 teaspoon flaky sea salt (e.g., Maldon)
- **For the Chocolate Coating:**
 - 1 (12-ounce) package good-quality dark or milk chocolate melting wafers or chocolate chips

Equipment:

- 9×9-inch baking dish (for caramel)
- Parchment paper
- Candy thermometer
- Double boiler or microwave-safe bowl for melting chocolate
- Fork or candy dipping tools
- Parchment paper-lined baking sheet

Instructions:

1. **Make the Caramel:** Prepare the chewy caramels according to Recipe #3. Once poured into the prepared 9×9-inch pan, allow them to cool completely at room temperature for 2–3 hours until firm.
2. **Cut the Caramel:** Once the caramel is firm, use the parchment paper to lift it out of the pan. Cut the caramel slab into small 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch squares. If they stick, lightly butter your knife or kitchen shears.
3. **Melt the Chocolate:** Melt the chocolate melting wafers or chips using a double boiler or microwave method until smooth.
4. **Dip the Caramels:** Using a fork or candy dipping tool, dip each caramel square into the melted chocolate, coating it completely. Lift it out, tapping gently against the edge of the bowl to remove excess chocolate.
5. **Add Sea Salt:** Place the chocolate-covered caramel onto the parchment-lined baking sheet. Immediately sprinkle a tiny pinch of flaky sea salt on top of each one while the chocolate is still wet.
6. **Chill:** Once all caramels are dipped and salted, refrigerate the baking sheet for about 30 minutes, or until the chocolate is completely set.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

07



Homemade Chocolate Truffles

Rich, elegant, and surprisingly easy to make.



Yields

Approx. 20–25 truffles



Prep time

20 minutes



Cool time

2–3 hours

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces good-quality dark chocolate (60–70% cacao), finely chopped
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- For coating: Unsweetened cocoa powder, finely chopped nuts, shredded coconut, powdered sugar, or melted tempered chocolate

Equipment:

- Heatproof bowl
- Small saucepan (for heating cream)
- Whisk or spatula
- Parchment paper-lined plate or tray

Instructions:

1. Place the finely chopped chocolate in a heatproof bowl.
2. In a small saucepan, heat the heavy cream over medium heat until it just begins to simmer around the edges (do not bring to a rolling boil).
3. Pour the hot cream over the chopped chocolate. Let it sit undisturbed for 5 minutes to allow the chocolate to melt.
4. After 5 minutes, whisk gently from the center outwards until the chocolate is completely melted and the mixture is smooth and glossy. This is your ganache.
5. Stir in the softened butter and vanilla extract until fully incorporated.
6. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2–3 hours, or until the ganache is firm enough to scoop and roll.
7. Shape the Truffles: Once firm, use a small spoon or a mini ice cream scoop to scoop out portions of the ganache (about one tablespoon each). Roll them quickly between your palms to form smooth balls. Your hands will get messy!
8. Coat the Truffles: Roll each truffle immediately in your desired coating (cocoa powder, chopped nuts, etc.).
9. Place the finished truffles on a parchment-lined plate or tray.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks, or at room temperature for a few days.

08



Candied Pecans (or Walnuts!)

A sweet and crunchy snack, perfect for gifting or topping desserts.



Yields
Approx. 2 cups



Prep time
5 minutes



Cook time
10–15 minutes



Cool time
15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups pecan halves (or walnut halves)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
- Pinch of salt

Equipment:

- Large non-stick skillet
- Rubber spatula or wooden spoon
- Parchment paper-lined baking sheet

Instructions:

1. In a large non-stick skillet, combine the sugar, water, cinnamon (if using), and salt. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the sugar dissolves and the mixture comes to a boil.
2. Add the pecan halves to the skillet. Continue to cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the liquid evaporates and the sugar begins to crystallize and cling to the nuts. This will take about 8–12 minutes.
3. Once the sugar has crystallized and the nuts look dry, continue to cook for another 1–3 minutes, stirring, until the sugar coating starts to melt slightly and turn light golden brown, becoming glossy and caramelized. Be careful not to burn them!
4. Immediately transfer the candied pecans onto the parchment-lined baking sheet. Spread them out in a single layer to prevent them from sticking together.
5. Let them cool completely for about 15 minutes. As they cool, they will become crunchy.
6. Once cool, break apart any pieces that are stuck together.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

09



White Chocolate Bark

Beautiful, festive, and easy to customize.



Yields

Approx. 1.5 lbs



Prep time

15 minutes



Cool time

30–45 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1.5 lbs good quality white chocolate (bars or wafers, not chips), finely chopped
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup shelled pistachios, roughly chopped
- Optional: Pinch of sea salt for sprinkling

Equipment:

- Parchment paper-lined baking sheet (approx. 10×15 inches)
- Microwave-safe bowl or double boiler
- Spatula

Instructions:

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Melt the white chocolate: Place the chopped white chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in 30-second intervals, stirring thoroughly after each interval, until the chocolate is smooth and melted. Be careful not to overheat white chocolate, as it can seize easily. Alternatively, melt in a double boiler over simmering water, stirring until smooth.
3. Pour the melted white chocolate onto the prepared baking sheet. Use an offset spatula or the back of a spoon to spread it evenly into a thin layer, about 1/4 inch thick.
4. Immediately sprinkle the dried cranberries and chopped pistachios evenly over the melted chocolate. If desired, lightly press them into the chocolate to ensure they adhere. You can also add a pinch of sea salt.
5. Refrigerate for 30–45 minutes, or until the chocolate is completely firm and set.
6. Once set, break the bark into irregular pieces.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks, or refrigerate if your home is warm.

10



Rock Candy

Grow your own beautiful sugar crystals!



Yields

Varies (multiple sticks)



Prep time

15 minutes



Cook time

5 minutes



Growing time

5–7 days

Ingredients:

- 2 cups granulated sugar, plus extra for seeding
- 1 cup water
- Optional: 1/4 teaspoon flavored extract (e.g., vanilla, peppermint)
- Optional: A few drops of food coloring

Equipment:

- Small saucepan
- Glass jars or tall heat-safe glasses
- Wooden skewers or strings (non-fuzzy, e.g., cotton twine)
- Clothespins or small clips (to hold skewers/strings)
- Paper towels or plastic wrap

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Seeded Skewers/Strings: Dampen a wooden skewer or a piece of cotton string and roll it in granulated sugar. This creates "seed" crystals for the rock candy to grow on. Let them dry completely (about 30 minutes) before using. This step is crucial for good crystal formation.
2. Make the Sugar Solution: In a small saucepan, combine 1 cup of water and 2 cups of sugar. Heat over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until all the sugar is completely dissolved. Do not let it boil vigorously. You want a clear, slightly thickened syrup.
3. Remove from heat. If using, stir in the flavored extract and food coloring.
4. Carefully pour the hot sugar solution into your clean glass jars or tall glasses. Fill them almost to the top.
5. Set up for Growing: Suspend a prepared skewer or string into each jar, ensuring it doesn't touch the bottom or sides of the glass. Use a clothespin or clip to hold the skewer in place, resting across the rim of the glass.
6. Grow the Crystals: Cover the top of the jars loosely with paper towels or plastic wrap to keep out dust but allow some air circulation.
7. Place the jars in a cool, undisturbed place at room temperature (avoid direct sunlight or extreme temperature changes).
8. Observe and Wait: Over the next 5–7 days (or even up to 2 weeks), you will see sugar crystals begin to form and grow on the skewers/strings. The longer you wait, the larger the crystals will typically get.
9. Harvest: Once your rock candy has reached the desired size, carefully remove the skewers from the solution. You may need to gently break away any crystals that have formed on the surface of the liquid around the skewer.
10. Place the rock candy on a plate lined with parchment paper or wax paper to dry completely for a few hours.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container.

11



Candy Cane Lollipops

Festive and fun, especially around the holidays.



Yields

Approx. 10–12 lollipops



Prep time

10 minutes



Cook time

15–20 minutes



Cool time

30–60 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2/3 cup light corn syrup
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract (or other flavor like cherry, cinnamon)
- Red food coloring (or other color)
- Lollipop sticks
- Optional: Sprinkles

Equipment:

- Heavy-bottomed saucepan (3–quart minimum)
- Candy thermometer
- Silicone baking mat or parchment paper-lined baking sheet
- Spatula or wooden spoon

Instructions:

1. Prepare your surface: Lay a silicone baking mat or parchment paper on a baking sheet. Arrange lollipop sticks on the mat, spaced a few inches apart.
2. In the heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup, and water. Stir gently over medium heat until the sugar dissolves. Avoid splashing sugar crystals onto the sides.
3. Insert your candy thermometer. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat without stirring.
4. Continue to boil until the mixture reaches 300°F (149°C), the "hard crack" stage.
5. Immediately remove the saucepan from the heat. Carefully stir in the peppermint extract. Be cautious, as the mixture will be very hot.
6. Coloring (Optional Swirls): You have a couple of options here:
 - A. Solid Color: Add a few drops of red food coloring to the entire mixture and stir until uniform.
 - B. Swirl: Pour about half of the clear candy mixture onto your prepared mat. Quickly add a few drops of red food coloring to the remaining candy in the pot and stir just once or twice to create streaks.
7. Forming Lollipops:
 - A. For solid color: Carefully spoon circles of the hot candy mixture over the ends of the lollipop sticks on your prepared mat.
 - B. For swirls: Spoon small amounts of both the clear and the colored candy onto the stick end, then use a clean toothpick or the back of a spoon to swirl the colors together gently.
8. If using sprinkles, add them immediately before the candy sets.
9. Allow the lollipops to cool completely and harden, which will take 30–60 minutes.
10. Once completely cool and hard, carefully peel them off the silicone mat or parchment paper.
11. Wrap individually in cellophane bags or plastic wrap to prevent stickiness.

Storage:

- Store at room temperature in an airtight container.

12

Marshmallow Pops

Colorful, customizable, and perfect for parties or gifting!



Yields

Approx. 20 pops



Prep time

15 minutes



Cook time

5 minutes
(melting chocolate)



Cool time

20–30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 (10-ounce) bag large marshmallows
- 12 ounces chocolate melting wafers or chocolate chips (milk, dark, or white)
- 20 lollipop sticks or paper straws
- Assorted sprinkles, crushed candy canes, or colored sugar for decorating

Equipment:

- Microwave-safe bowl or double boiler
- Parchment paper-lined baking sheet
- Small bowls for decorations
- Spoon or spatula

Instructions:

1. Prepare the marshmallows: Insert a lollipop stick or paper straw into each marshmallow, pushing it about halfway through. Set aside.
2. Melt the chocolate:
 - A. Microwave method: Place chocolate wafers or chips in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat in 30-second intervals, stirring after each, until smooth.
 - B. Double-boiler method: Place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pot of simmering water. Stir until fully melted and smooth.
3. Dip the marshmallows: Hold a marshmallow by the stick and dip it into the melted chocolate, covering about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the marshmallow. Allow any excess to drip off.
4. Decorate: Immediately roll or sprinkle with decorations (sprinkles, crushed candy canes, or colored sugar). For a fancier look, drizzle with contrasting melted chocolate.
5. Set the pops: Place each dipped marshmallow upright on the parchment-lined baking sheet. Let them cool at room temperature for 20–30 minutes, or refrigerate for 10 minutes to speed up setting.
6. Serve & Store: Once hardened, wrap individually in plastic wrap or cellophane bags.

Storage:

- Store at room temperature for up to 1 week.



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