

Black jacks

From the sweeties.net wiki

Black Jacks are small black chews with a strong aniseed flavour. The packet calls them an aniseed flavour chew, which is about as plain a description as a sweet can have, and they have been in British sweet shops for roughly a hundred years.

Where Black Jacks come from

Black Jacks date from the 1920s. Accounts differ on who made them first: Barratt's history says its Black Jack and Fruit Salad chews appeared in 1920, while other accounts credit Trebor with introducing Black Jacks. Today they are made under the Barratt brand, owned by Valeo Confectionery, in the UK and Spain. The original wrappers showed golliwogs, an image the brand has long since dropped. The story of how that image came to be on British sweets, and why it went, is told in [the golliwog and British sweets](#).

What is in a Black Jack?

The recipe has changed over the years. In 2021 the ingredients were glucose syrup, sugar, palm oil, a colour made from vegetable carbon, hydrolysed pea protein, citric acid, aniseed oil and trisodium citrate, an acidity regulator. Ingredients on UK labels are listed in order of weight, so the chew itself is mostly glucose syrup and sugar.

A 250 g bag holds 46 chews, so each one weighs a little over 5 g, and there are about 18 in 100 g.

Why aniseed?

Aniseed comes from the anise plant, native to the eastern Mediterranean and southwest Asia, and its flavour is often compared with liquorice. It turns up in all sorts of British sweets, from [aniseed balls](#) to aniseed twists. They are not the same flavour, though, and they do not come from the same plant: see [is aniseed the same as liquorice?](#).

The Fruit Salad partner

Black Jacks have a sister chew, the Fruit Salad, flavoured with raspberry and pineapple and also sold under the Barratt name. Read about it in [Fruit Salad chews](#).

If you like aniseed

We do not sell Black Jacks, but if you like aniseed, we sell [SW038](#) by the 100 g, with the full ingredients and allergen panel on the card. For more on chewy sweets, see [what are chews?](#)

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