

Blackpool rock

From the sweeties.net wiki

Rock is sold at seaside towns all around Britain, and it is often known by the town that sells it, as with Blackpool rock. It is a thick, hard stick of boiled sugar, usually peppermint, with the word BLACKPOOL running right through it.

Thick sticks

Most sticks of seaside rock are about 1 to 2.5 centimetres across and 20 to 25 centimetres long. Blackpool rock is usually at least 2.5 centimetres across, and sticks made for special shop displays can be as thick as 17 centimetres and up to 2 metres long. The name runs through the whole length of the stick, so it can be read at both ends, reversed at one of them, and stays readable however much you bite off.

The letters

Lettered rock is made by hand by skilled workers. Each letter starts out about the size of a thumbprint, made from thin strips of coloured and white sugar. The letters are not made in the order they are spelled. The square shaped letters are made first, because they hold their shape, and the triangle and round letters are made last, while the sugar is still soft. So the letters of BLACKPOOL ROCK might be made in the order B, P, R, the two Ks, the two Ls, A, the two Cs and the three Os, before being laid out in the right order with strips of white between them. See [how do they get the letters in rock?](#)

The song

One of Blackpool's most successful regular performers in the 1930s and 1940s was George Formby, and in 1937 he recorded a song called With My Little Stick of Blackpool Rock. It later caused trouble. In 1946 it became a problem at the BBC for broadcasts of Formby or his music: a BBC manager wrote that there was no record of the song being banned, but that certain lines in the lyric must not be broadcast. Other sources, including the BBC itself, say the song was banned from being broadcast. Formby was no stranger to this: an earlier song of his, The Window Cleaner, had also been banned by the BBC.

A George Formby Society was formed at the Imperial Hotel in Blackpool a few months after his death in 1961, and grew to more than 800 members around the world.

More about rock

Blackpool rock is one of many seaside rocks. Lettered rock is usually credited to Ben Bullock, who sent a batch to Blackpool in 1887, although Morecambe has its own claim: see [where does seaside rock come from?](#) For the full story of rock, how it is made and why it goes soft, see [seaside rock](#), [how is seaside rock made?](#) and [why does seaside rock go soft?](#)

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