

Why are Jelly Babies covered in powder?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Pick up a Jelly Baby and your fingers come away dusty. That fine powder is starch, and it is there because of the way Jelly Babies are made.

Moulded in starch

Jelly Babies, like many soft jelly sweets, are shaped in trays of starch. A machine called a starch mogul fills trays with starch, presses the shapes of the sweets into it, and pours the hot liquid jelly into the holes. The sweets are left to set, while the starch soaks up some of the extra water and makes them easier to handle. Then the trays are tipped out, the sweets are separated from the starch, and the starch is dried and used again.

Some of that starch clings to the sweets. Jelly Babies made in the United Kingdom tend to be dusted in starch left over from manufacturing, where it is used to help release them from the mould. That is the powder you see.

The starch mogul

Before machines, all of this was done by hand. Starch moguls were invented around 1899 and were in common use within 20 years. They cut the cost of making sweets, and they made factories safer: the old starch rooms had high levels of starch dust in the air, which workers breathed in and which could catch fire or explode. Starch moguls are also used to make jelly beans and gummy bears. The starch used is usually corn, wheat or rice starch, because potato starch tends to clump as it dries.

Not everywhere

Not all jelly babies are dusty. Jelly Babies made in Australia generally lack the starch coating. Like most other gummy sweets, jelly babies contain gelatine.

A dusty sweet

Jelly Babies have been made in Britain since the 19th century, first as Unclaimed Babies and later as Peace Babies: see [what were Jelly Babies originally called?](#) Each colour of Bassett's Jelly Babies even has its own name: see [do Jelly Babies have names?](#)

We sell Jelly Babies in our pick and mix. For more on how they are made, see [how are Jelly Babies made?](#)

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