

How much sugar is in sweets?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Sweets are, almost by definition, mostly sugar. Sugar confectionery is the name for confections made primarily of sugar, and for some sweets that is almost all there is. Here is how much sugar you can expect, and how it measures up against health advice.

How much sugar different sweets contain

- **Boiled sweets and rock.** Most hard sweets are nearly 100 per cent sugar by weight, with only a tiny amount of flavour and colour and almost no water: see [what are boiled sweets?](#)
- **Jelly sweets and gums.** Gummy sweets are made mostly of glucose syrup and sugar, along with starch, a gelling agent such as gelatine, and water. Because they hold more water, they can have somewhat less sugar per 100 g than hard sweets, but sugars are still the main ingredients.
- **Chews and toffees.** These are made from boiled sugar with fat, so sugar is joined by fat in their nutrition.
- **Sugar free sweets.** These replace sugar with sugar alcohols and sweeteners: see [what are sugar free sweets made with?](#)

The only reliable figure for a particular sweet is the one on its label, which shows sugars per 100 g.

The NHS daily limits

The NHS says free sugars, which include any sugars added to food and drink as well as those in honey, syrups and fruit juice, should make up no more than 5 per cent of the energy you get from food and drink each day. In practice that means:

- adults: no more than 30 g of free sugars a day, about 7 sugar cubes
- children aged 7 to 10: no more than 24 g a day, about 6 cubes
- children aged 4 to 6: no more than 19 g a day, about 5 cubes
- children aged 2 to 3: no more than 14 g a day

The NHS lists sweets, along with cakes, biscuits, chocolate and some fizzy drinks, among the foods containing free sugars that people should cut down on.

Putting it together

Because boiled sweets are nearly all sugar, a 100 g bag of them can contain close to 100 g of sugar, more than three times an adult's daily maximum. Even a handful of 30 g of hard sweets is roughly a full day's

allowance for an adult. That does not mean you can never have sweets, but it does mean a bag is a treat to share or to make last.

Reading the label

The NHS uses these guides for total sugars on food labels:

- **High:** more than 22.5 g of total sugars per 100 g
- **Low:** 5 g or less of total sugars per 100 g

By this measure, sweets made with sugar are high in sugar. Sweets are also among the foods covered by the rules on promoting less healthy food, which moved them away from shop checkouts: see [why sweets were moved away from the checkout](#)

Sugar and teeth

How often you eat sugar matters for your teeth as much as how much. Keeping sweets to mealtimes, rather than grazing, reduces the number of acid attacks on your teeth: see [why do sweets stick to your teeth?](#)

Our pick and mix is sold by the 100 g, so the weight on your order is a handy guide to how much you are buying.

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