

How is fudge made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Fudge is made by mixing sugar, butter and milk, and its texture depends on two things: how hot the mixture gets, and how the sugar crystallises as it cools.

Step by step

1. **Dissolve.** Milk and sugar are warmed and gently stirred so nothing burns on the bottom. As the sugar dissolves it forms a supersaturated solution. Crystals can form on the sides of the pan above the liquid, so cookbooks advise buttering the sides or brushing them down with a pastry brush dipped in water.
2. **Boil to soft ball.** The mixture is boiled to the soft ball stage. Sources give ranges from about 112 to 118°C. Cook it too hot and the fudge will be dry; below about 116°C it will not set as it should. Humidity, altitude and the weather all shift the exact point.
3. **Add butter and cool.** Butter is added, and the molten fudge is left on a cool slab until it reaches about 48 to 49°C.
4. **Beat.** The fudge is beaten by hand until it becomes thick, creamy and less glossy. An electric beater would go too fast to control.
5. **Set and cut.** It is left to set, then cut into squares.

The science of smooth fudge

As fudge cools and is beaten, the sugar starts to crystallise. The aim is a mass of very small crystals, which give the smooth, creamy texture of a crystalline sweet: see [how are sweets made?](#) Some makers encourage the right kind of crystallisation by adding marshmallow, invert sugar syrup, corn syrup or fondant. If the slab is too warm, a sugar crust can form that cracks in the mouth, which some makers treat as a fault.

Where fudge came from

Modern fudge has its origins in the 19th century United States. Chocolate caramels made from milk, brown sugar, chocolate and butter were popular there in the 1860s and 1870s, and by the 1880s and 1890s recipes for fudge appeared widely in American magazines. It became especially popular at women's colleges. One Vassar College student, Emelyn Battersby Hartridge, wrote of buying fudge in Baltimore in 1886 for 40 cents a pound, and claimed to have introduced it to Vassar in 1888 by selling a 30 lb batch.

In Britain, communities in the Midlands and Cornwall had long made their own versions of Scottish tablet, which came to be called fudge by the 1890s. Cornish fudge goes back to the 18th century, when Cornish confectioners began using clotted cream instead of milk: see [what is the difference between fudge and](#)

[tablet?](#)

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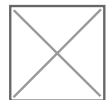
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