

How is candy floss made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Candy floss is a spun sugar sweet that looks like cotton. It is made by heating sugar until it is liquid and spinning it outwards through very small holes, so that it cools and sets almost instantly into fine strands.

How the machine works

1. **Sugar in.** Granulated sugar, often coloured, is poured into a small bowl in the spinning head of the machine. Coloured sugar, or separate sugar and food colouring, gives the colour.
2. **Melt.** Heaters near the rim of the head melt the sugar.
3. **Spin.** As the head spins, the molten sugar is squeezed out through tiny holes by centrifugal force.
4. **Set in the air.** Out in the air, the thin streams cool and solidify into fine threads, which are caught in a much larger bowl around the spinning head.
5. **Gather.** Once the threads have built up on the inside of the bowl, a stick, a cone or a hand is used to gather them up.

Candy floss usually contains small amounts of flavouring, and it naturally takes the colour of the sugar used, often changed with food colouring. It is sold in bags, on sticks and on paper cones: see [is candy floss vegan?](#)

Invented by a dentist

Spun sugar was known in Europe in the 19th century, but it was expensive and labour intensive, and some suggest versions of it go back to 15th century Italy. The machine that brought it to everyone was invented in 1897 by a dentist, William Morrison, and a confectioner, John C. Wharton.

Their sweet was introduced to a wide audience at the 1904 World's Fair in St Louis as Fairy Floss, and it was a great success: they sold 68,655 boxes at 25 cents a box. A visitor to the fairground as it was being built described electricity being put to a new use, spinning candy.

Electric improvements

In 1905 Albert D. Robinson of Lynn, Massachusetts, filed a patent for an electric candy spinning machine with a motor driven bowl, which he later transferred to the General Electric Company. His patent is still the basis of the candy floss machine. In 1921 another dentist, Joseph Lascaux of New Orleans, invented a similar machine, and his patent named the sweet cotton candy. In the 1970s an automatic machine arrived that made and packaged the floss.

The names

It is candy floss in the United Kingdom, Ireland, India, New Zealand and South Africa, fairy floss in Australia, and cotton candy in the United States. Similar sweets include the Iranian pashmak.

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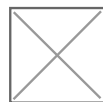
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