

How are lollipops made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

A lollipop is hard candy mounted on a stick, made for sucking or licking. The idea is simple and has probably been invented many times: as far back as the Middle Ages, the nobility ate boiled sugar with the help of sticks or handles. Big makers now turn them out by machine, at more than 1,000 a minute.

The recipe

The main ingredients of a standard lollipop are sugar and corn syrup, the American name for glucose syrup: see [what is glucose syrup?](#) Water is needed at the start to dissolve the sugar, but by the end of the process the moisture has fallen to less than 2 per cent. Everything else, from flavour and colour to a bubble gum centre, is optional.

The corn syrup does an important job. It is an inhibitor, which stops the sugar crystallising as it cools. Without one, crystals would form quickly and on their own, because the sugar is so concentrated. Cream of tartar, honey and butter are also used as inhibitors.

Inside a lollipop factory

Spangler Candy Company, which makes Dum Dums in Ohio, describes its process on its own website, and the reference book *How Products Are Made* describes a similar line:

1. **Mix.** Sugar and corn syrup are measured and mixed into a big batch. In the line described in *How Products Are Made*, sugar is first dissolved in water at about 82°C, then mixed 55 per cent liquid sugar to 45 per cent corn syrup.
2. **Cook.** The batch is heated to a high temperature to drive off moisture so the candy will harden. Spangler uses large copper kettles. The other account describes a pre cook to about 109°C, then about four minutes of vacuum cooking to about 143°C, in batches of up to 68 kg.
3. **Flavour.** Colour, flavour and acids are added. Citric and malic acid help bring out the flavour and take the edge off the sweetness: see [what is malic acid in sweets?](#)
4. **Knead.** A kneading table cools the batch and folds it over and over to mix in the colour and flavour.
5. **Rope.** Rollers slowly form the candy into a rope, and sizing wheels bring it down to the right thickness.
6. **Form.** A press shapes the rope into lollipop heads and inserts a paper stick, at more than 1,000 a minute.
7. **Cool.** The lollipops are cooled until they harden. At Spangler they pass through large tumblers.
8. **Wrap.** Spangler's wrapping machines each wrap about four lollipops every second, before they are bagged and boxed.

Why a lollipop is glassy

When sugar syrup is heated to a high temperature, almost all of the water is driven off. Instead of setting as crystals, the syrup cools into a glassy, amorphous solid. Its final moisture is about 1 to 2 per cent, compared with 8 to 12 per cent in crystalline sweets such as fudge. The key change as a lollipop cools is called the glass transition: see [how are boiled sweets made?](#)

British lollies

- **Drumstick lollies** were introduced in 1957 by Swizzels, whose factory is in New Mills, Derbyshire. They are chewy lollies about 5 cm long, flavoured milk and raspberry: see [Drumstick lollies](#)
- **Chupa Chups**, from Spain, are individually heat sealed in the factory and are best opened by twisting the base of the wrapper. Their logo was designed by Salvador Dalí in 1969: see [Enric Bernat, Chupa Chups and Salvador Dalí](#)

Hard sweets need care with young children, sticks or not: see [hard sweets and young children](#).

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