

How is bubblegum made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Bubblegum is a type of chewing gum designed to be blown out of the mouth as a bubble. It is made on the same kind of line as ordinary gum: the base is warmed and mixed with sweeteners, softeners and flavours into a dough, then extruded, shaped, cut and wrapped, and bubble gum chunks are often cut straight off the extruder: see [how is chewing gum made?](#) What makes bubblegum different is what goes in.

The base

Every gum is built on a gum base, the part that never dissolves. It carries the sweeteners and flavours and gives gum its chewy texture. Gum bases are made from:

- **Elastomers**, which give elasticity or bounce: natural latexes such as chicle, or synthetic rubbers such as styrene butadiene rubber, butyl rubber and polyisobutylene.
- **Resins**, which give body and strength, most often glycerol esters of gum, terpene resins or polyvinyl acetate.
- **Waxes**, which soften it, usually paraffin or microcrystalline wax.
- **Fillers**, for texture, usually calcium carbonate or talc. Acid flavoured gum uses talc, because acids react with calcium carbonate and give off carbon dioxide.

A bubblegum base is formulated to blow bubbles. It contains higher levels of elastomers, or higher molecular weight polymers, than a chewing gum base. Bubblegum usually contains 15 to 20 per cent gum base, against 20 to 25 per cent in chewing gum and 25 to 30 per cent in sugar free gum. Natural bases such as chicle have largely been replaced by synthetic, petroleum derived ones: see [is chewing gum made of plastic?](#)

Why it blows bubbles

Scientists have measured the difference. Under moderate stress, ordinary chewing gum springs back by 25 to 40 per cent, which gives it a satisfying chew, while bubblegum recovers less than 15 per cent. Bubblegum also resists being stretched, getting stiffer the more it is pulled, and it withstands more stress before it breaks. That is what lets it hold a large, stable bubble when you push it out with your tongue.

Pink, and less sticky

Walter Diemer, an accountant at the Fleer Chewing Gum Company in Philadelphia, made the first successful bubblegum in 1928. His recipe came out a dingy grey, so he added red dye, diluted to pink, because it was the only colour he had to hand: see [Walter Diemer, the accountant who invented bubble gum](#)

. Until the 1970s bubblegum still tended to stick to your face when a bubble popped. Then synthetic bases arrived that almost never stick, and the first American brands to use them were Hubba Bubba and Bubble Yum.

The flavour

Bubblegum flavour is not one fruit. It is a blend, and it varies from one company to another. Synthetic versions may use compounds such as methyl salicylate, ethyl butyrate, benzyl acetate, amyl acetate or cinnamic aldehyde, and a natural bubblegum flavour can be made from banana, pineapple, cinnamon, cloves and wintergreen. In taste tests, children tend to prefer strawberry and blue raspberry.

Record bubbles

In 1994 Susan Montgomery Williams of Fresno, California, set the Guinness World Record for the largest bubblegum bubble, 58 cm across, using her hands to help shape it. The record for the largest hands free bubble, 51 cm, was set by Chad Fell on 24 April 2004.

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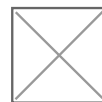
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