

How are hundreds and thousands made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Hundreds and thousands are tiny balls of sugar and starch, traditionally opaque white but now made in many colours. The name is used in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. In France they are nonpareils, a name taken to mean without equal, and in the United States they are usually just called sprinkles.

How they are made

Hundreds and thousands are made by panning, the same way as sugared almonds, only far smaller: see [what is sugar panning?](#) The German maker Rudolf Hoinkis of Görlitz, which has made them as Liebesperlen, love pearls, since 1908, works like this:

1. **Start with one crystal.** The core of each ball is a single sugar crystal of just the right size, sorted out from the sugar delivered to the factory.
2. **Tumble.** The crystals go into tilted, rotating copper kettles.
3. **Spray and dust.** Again and again, they are sprayed with a dextrose solution and dusted.
4. **Build the layers.** Over about 100 hours, each crystal is wrapped in 60 to 70 coats, until it is a ball a few millimetres across. A 2019 profile of the firm puts the whole job at 120 hours.
5. **Colour.** The finished balls are coloured in many shades.

Hoinkis makes up to 1,200 tonnes a year, and keeps one part of the method secret: why the little balls do not stick together in the kettles.

How small are they?

Very. The nonpareils used in a 2022 study in the journal Scientific Reports weighed about 2.3 mg each, which works out at more than 400 in a single gram.

An old decoration

Nonpareils can be traced to 17th century French recipes, where they were used as a topping in place of plain sugar. They may have grown out of the old medicinal use of sugar, as a miniature version of comfits. In 1844 the Philadelphia confectioner Eleanor Parkinson described making them by her comfit method, with hot pans and hot syrup. Diablotins, little devils, were small pieces of chocolate covered in nonpareils, made since the 18th century and perhaps among the first chocolate sweets of all.

Sprinkles, strands and jimmies

- **Hundreds and thousands** are the round ones.
- **Sugar strands** are the longer, tube shaped sprinkles, called jimmies in parts of the United States.
- **Vermicelli** is a British name for chocolate sprinkles.
- **Muisjes** in the Netherlands are sugar coated anise seeds, served on rusks to celebrate the birth of a baby.

In Australia and New Zealand, hundreds and thousands on buttered white bread make fairy bread, a children's party food.

On chocolate buttons

Chocolate drops topped with nonpareils are sold in the UK as Jazzies, Jazzles or Jazz drops, and as Snowies in white chocolate. In Australia they are freckles. For a sprinkled sweet in our own pick and mix, try [SW043](#); the card opens up to show the full ingredients and allergens. See also [how are chocolate buttons made?](#)

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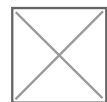
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