

How are rhubarb and custard sweets made?

From the sweeties.net wiki

Rhubarb and custards are two tone boiled sweets, half pink and half yellow, named after the classic British pairing of stewed rhubarb and custard: see [rhubarb and custard](#). They are made like other boiled sweets, and the ingredient lists show there is no pudding in them at all.

How they are made

Boiled sweets like these start the same way:

1. **Boil.** Sugar and glucose syrup are boiled until almost all the water has gone, so the sweet will set hard: see [how are boiled sweets made?](#)
2. **Flavour, colour and sharpen.** On the slab, the hot batch is split, coloured pink and yellow, flavoured, and sharpened with citric acid.
3. **Combine and shape.** The two colours are brought together and formed into sweets. Drop rollers, the engraved roller machines used for many boiled sweets, can make two colour layered sweets as well as single colour ones: see [how are pear drops made?](#)
4. **Coat.** Some rhubarb and custards are then coated in sugar, which is why one of the packets below calls them sugar coated.

What is in them

The food database Open Food Facts records these ingredient lists for UK rhubarb and custards:

- **Tesco Rhubarb and Custard Sweets:** sugar, glucose syrup, flavourings, citric acid, and the colours anthocyanins and curcumin.
- **Harper's Sweet Shop sugar coated rhubarb and custard:** sugar, glucose, citric acid, flavouring, and the colours E104 and E122.

Neither lists milk or any rhubarb. The custard is a flavour, and so is the rhubarb.

A question of colour

E104, quinoline yellow, and E122, carmoisine, are two of the Southampton six, synthetic colours that must carry a warning in the UK that they may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children: see [the Southampton six colours](#). Tesco's version uses anthocyanins for pink and curcumin, from turmeric, for yellow instead: see [how are sweets coloured?](#)

The gummy version

Rhubarb and custard has moved beyond boiled sweets. The sweet maker Candy Kittens makes a rhubarb and custard gummy that lists 5 per cent rhubarb juice and 5 per cent white grape juice from concentrate, with potato and pea protein, colours from fruit and plant concentrates, and a carnauba wax glaze.

In our pick and mix

We sell rhubarb and custards as [SW034](#). The card opens up to show the full ingredients, colours and allergens, so you can check before you buy.

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