

Marshmallows

From the sweeties.net wiki

Marshmallows are soft, springy sweets made by whipping a hot sugar syrup with a protein such as gelatine until it is full of air. About half of a marshmallow is air, which is why it is so light: see [how are marshmallows made?](#)

From a marsh plant to a sweet

The sweet takes its name from the marsh mallow, *Althaea officinalis*, a wetland weed native to parts of Europe, North Africa and Asia that grows in marshes and other damp places. Ancient Egyptians are said to have been the first to use its root, to soothe coughs and sore throats.

In the early to mid 19th century, French confectioners made a sweet from it called *pâte de guimauve*: dried marshmallow root whipped with sugar, water and egg whites into a spongy, soft sweet. Makers then began replacing the mallow root with gelatine, which gave a more stable marshmallow.

In the late 19th century, makers took up the starch mogul, pressing shapes into trays of starch and filling the hollows, and by the early 20th century marshmallows could be made for mass sale. In 1956, Alex Doumak patented the extrusion process, which pipes the mixture out as a rope and cuts it into pieces.

Toasting them caught on early too. In 1892 a New Jersey newspaper reported that marshmallow roasts were the newest thing in summer resort diversions, and in the United States s'mores, a toasted marshmallow and a slab of chocolate between two crackers, became a traditional campfire treat.

What is in them now

Haribo Chamallows, as recorded by Open Food Facts. Glucose syrup, sugar, dextrose, water, sorbitol syrup, gelatine, beetroot and safflower concentrates, and flavourings.

Pink and White Marshmallows, as listed by Sweets and Candy. Glucose fructose syrup, sugar, water, halal gelatine, dextrose, maize starch, lactic acid, vanilla flavouring, and beetroot red, E162, as a colour. The retailer says they may contain traces of soya.

Why they are so light

Two proteins are commonly used to trap the air as marshmallows are whipped: gelatine, and albumen, the proteins of egg white, which is good at forming foams. Once the mixture sets, the bubbles are held in place. The air is also why marshmallows puff up in a microwave and why they catch fire so readily: see [why do marshmallows expand in the microwave?](#) and [why do marshmallows catch fire so easily?](#)

Diet points

- **Gelatine.** Both recipes here are made with gelatine, so they are not suitable for vegetarians or vegans: see [gelatine in sweets explained](#)
- **Vegan marshmallows** use a plant gelling agent such as agar instead: see [how to make marshmallows without gelatine](#)
- **Egg.** Versions made with egg white instead of gelatine can suit vegetarians who eat eggs, but not vegans, or anyone with an egg allergy.
- **Halal and kosher.** Marshmallows are generally not considered halal or kosher unless their gelatine comes from halal or kosher animals, or they are vegan: see [a guide to halal sweets](#)

For other sweets made in much the same way, see [what are foam sweets made of?](#) and, for melting them, [how to melt marshmallows](#)

In our pick and mix

We sell [SW050](#) by the 100 g. Recipes differ between makers, so the card opens up to show the full ingredients and allergens for the marshmallow twists we actually stock.

Earn rewards on sweeties.net

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

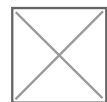
Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.



sweeties.net · Tunbridge Wells, Kent · hello@sweeties.net · 3-click cancel at [sweeties.net/cancel/](#)