

A Short History of Breakfast Cereals [B1]

Ormai sono un elemento fondamentale delle colazioni di tutto il mondo, ma i cereali così come li conosciamo oggi nacquero per sbaglio alla fine del 1800 negli Stati Uniti, quando i fratelli Kellogg tentarono di riciclare del grano raffermo per servirlo ai pazienti della loro clinica.



The process is very simple: open the box, let the cereals fall into the [bowl](#), [pour](#) some milk on it, and enjoy! Breakfast cereals are an everyday [staple](#) in homes [throughout](#) the Western world with numerous varieties on offer. Although warm cereals like [porridge](#) (oatmeal in the US) have a long history globally, it is products by the US company Kellogg's that have really revolutionised breakfast time – [for better, and for worse](#). It all started in a medical spa and resort in Michigan known as the Battle Creek Sanitarium, and with the invention of the [humble corn flake](#).

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

Breakfast in America traditionally consisted of [leftovers](#) from the night before, [hash](#), or fried foods such as eggs and sausages. When the industrial revolution came, people were [urged](#) to spend less time preparing food. At

the same time, diseases like tuberculosis became common, and doctors [warned](#) against the evils of refined [carbs](#) and meat.

AN ACCIDENTAL INVENTION

John Harvey Kellogg was a [physician](#) with a passion for healthy living. In 1886 he established Battle Creek, a [wellness retreat](#) where he treated his patients with [plant-based](#) diets designed to calm their minds and [curb](#) their sexual urges. Looking for plain foods that would improve his patients' digestive health, Dr. Kellogg started experimenting with cereal. There are several versions of how '[corn flakes](#)' were invented. According to the Kellogg Company, in 1898, John Kellogg and his brother Will were trying to make granola when they left a piece of [wheat](#)-based [dough](#) unwatched, causing it to ferment. When compressed in thin [sheets](#), the [dough](#) produced flakes that became [crispy](#) when toasted in the oven. Will Kellogg kept working on the recipe and discovered that corn produced even [crunchier](#) flakes. They served them at the [sanitarium](#), and the patients loved them. [Witnessing](#) this reaction, Will Kellogg decided to sell them to the general public. His brother wasn't interested in this commercial venture, so Will bought the rights to the recipe and, in 1906, founded the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company.

WIDE DISTRIBUTION

The [completion](#) of the transcontinental railroad meant that the United States were more connected than ever and that a mass market was available for entrepreneurs like Kellogg. He invested in [advertising](#) campaigns that presented his [corn flakes](#) as an attractive as well as healthy snack — distancing the product from his brother's conviction that cereal would reduce one's sex [drive](#). Sales [shot up](#), and by 1909 the company was manufacturing 120.000 boxes of Corn Flakes a day. [Resentful](#) of his brother's success, John Kellogg [sued](#) Will for the use of the family name, but lost.

A MODERN COMPANY

Will Kellogg was all about innovation, and he kept experimenting with food production. When the Big Depression struck in 1929, Kellogg's doubled its advertising and accelerated production. Will also cut working hours in his factories from forty to thirty hours a week, improving production figures without reducing salaries. However, rival cereal products were starting to appear, and Kellogg's needed an edge.

TOO MUCH SUGAR!

When he founded his company, Will Kellogg thought that adding some sugar to the corn flakes would make them even tastier — and he was right. From the 1950s on, however, new varieties of corn flakes were introduced making the cereal even sweeter, as children were targeted as a lucrative market. Honey, almonds, strawberry purée or, simply, more sugar were added. Parents began to notice their kids experienced increasing hyperactivity in the mornings and midday slumps, while their weight shot up. In the last few decades, national regulations have been introduced to control the amount of sugar in cereals. Today the original Kellogg's Corn Flakes is still considered a nutritious breakfast. Present in 180 countries around the world, the recipe for the cereal that shook up breakfast time remains the same as it was a hundred years ago.

Glossary

- **staple** = alimento base
- **advertising** = pubblicità
- **notice** = rendersi conto
- **weight** = peso
- **pour** = versare
- **humble** = umile
- **porridge** = fiocchi d'avena cotti serviti con latte o acqua
- **sued** = denunciare
- **edge** = vantaggio
- **urged** = spronare
- **sanitarium** = casa di cura
- **drive** = impulso
- **targeted** = puntare a
- **almonds** = mandorle
- **for better, and for worse** = nel bene e nel male
- **carbs** = carboidrati
- **plant-based** = vegetariano
- **sheets** = strati
- **Resentful** = indignato
- **crunchier** = più croccante
- **Witnessing** = essere testimone
- **completion** = compimento
- **bowl** = ciotola
- **corn flake** = fiocco di mais
- **leftovers** = resti
- **physician** = medico
- **crispy** = croccante
- **midday slumps** = cali a mezzogiorno
- **wellness retreat** = ritiro di benessere
- **curb** = frenare
- **wheat** = grano
- **was all about** = distinguersi per, concentrarsi su
- **tastier** = più saporiti

- **struck** = colpire
- **shook up** = rivoluzionare
- **throughout** = in tutto
- **hash** = pasticcio
- **warned** = avvisare
- **dough** = impasto
- **shot up** = impennarsi