

# Hard Crack (sugar)

a sweet favored by six

**Number of servings:** depends on how much you use & size of molds

**Cook time:** varies— at least 30 min though, probably

Most recipes call for ingredients, but this one really calls for tools.

Most vital— a candy thermometer! Yes, yes, you could in theory do this with just a glass of water and attentiveness but no. And you may think you've a thermometer for measuring various meats (human or other) but what you need is a candy thermometer— ideally a digital one.

Also crucial— heat tolerant mold & spatula. Yes, yes, you could in theory just pour it onto a tray or something, but half the novelty here is the texture. And sugar candy is in large part consumed visually- anticipating what that big o' sexy lump of sugar may taste like (even if it always tastes the same). I have personally melted 2 different 'candy molds' and one (heirloom) spatula because they were not rated for such heat.

The magic number(s) : **300° – 310° F aka 150° – 155° C**

## Ingredients list:

- **sugar** - ideally white and about as much as you want to have as a final product. Try starting with 2 cups?
- **corn syrup** - needed for some reason to help the crystals form I heard? Probably could do without. Measuring is hard- I just pour some amount in. Maybe 1/3rd cup worth?
- **water** - you need enough to cover/dissolve the sugar in, but you're also going to boil it all off so be sparing
- Optional
  - **butter** - I often start with a tab of butter thrown into the pot. This adds a richness to the final candy but also makes the boiling down stage trickier as it's more inclined to boil up/over

- **flavor** - want to use them tiny little vials of flavor concentrate. Just a dash at the very end, mix, and then pour
- **salt** - everything is better with salt. I sometimes sprinkle the molds with some fancy salt before pouring the sugar in

## Cooking instructions:

1. Prep molds, have them ready and off to the side. Sometimes I put salt and/or sprinkles in ahead of time to fancy it all up
2. Select pot large enough to contain everything plus some room to bubble up in. I like my portion sizes small and thus make small quantities in small pots— need to have enough liquid/sludge to be able to stick the thermometer needle in
3. (optional) if you're using butter, melt it first
4. Add sugar, syrup, and water to pot. Mix.
5. Bring it to a boil- probably medium to medium high heat? Once boiling, bring it down in temp but keep it bubbling. Don't touch it. If there's butter in there, you might have to snatch it off the heat every now and then to keep from boiling over or nudging the surface to break up the fat layer.
6. Boil off all that water you added. Temperature will wallow at boiling point for a long time. The nature of the bubbles will change as it goes and you will become familiar with their patterns after successive batches.
7. At some point (maybe 20 min in? Really depends on quantity and settings) bubbles will get slower and thicker and the temperature will rise rapidly. Get ready!
8. All you need to do is hit the magic temperature window. You don't hold it there, you reach it and then you're done! Remove from heat. Pull too soon and it'll remain sticky, pull too late and it'll have a bit of a burnt flavor.
9. (optional) if you're using flavor, mix it in real quick. Ditto for coloring (gel) if you'd like
10. Pour the sugar out into the molds! Work time is limited so don't dally. Also, it's hot— like fuck you up hot— so **be careful!**
11. Let cool on countertop
12. Pop 'em out and enjoy! Don't let them sit out for long, they'll get sticky if there's *any* moisture in the air. For longer-term storage, roll them in powdered sugar and store in an airtight container.