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# SALLY'S CANDY ADDICTION

TASTY TRUFFLES, FUDGES & TREATS FOR YOUR SWEET-TOOTH FIX

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Thank you to my readers!! (I want to use about a thousand exclamation points here.) You're my favorite people on the planet. Your sweet teeth and constant excitement about cookbook #2 made it easier to write. You told me your favorite candies, which helped me create the table of contents. Not only this, you've made my blog, Sally's Baking Addiction, a fun-filled community. Please never stop being you! Can I say I love you here? Because I love you.

And finally, thank you to my husband, Kevin. Thank you for all those late nights manning the stove, stirring caramel, toffee, and fudge while I wrote blog posts. I'm sure learning how to properly make toffee was the first thing on your list after marrying me. Thank you for doing all the dishes even after working all day, for your daily emergency grocery store runs, for taste-testing every single recipe, and for smiling through it all. But most of all? Thank you for believing in me when I felt like giving up.



—Sally

# INTRODUCTION

There is sticky goop on my hands, sugar all over the floor, and I'm pretty sure I just bought out every single bar of Ghirardelli® chocolate from all the grocery stores within a five-mile radius. It's early December and I'm making dozens of holiday candies to gift this year. As I cook my seventh batch of fudge, I'm beginning to rethink this whole "only homemade gifts this year!" plan.

Welcome to my candy land. It's sort of like my baking addiction, but there's not as much oven involved. Here we trade flour for sugar, and the milk for heavy cream, and instead of a batch of cookies, we'll bond over a batch of chocolate-covered caramels. Oh, there are cookies, too. Wait until you hit the last chapter of this book.

I chose candy as the subject for my second cookbook because, well, truthfully, it scared me a little. How do you use a candy thermometer? What is the correct temperature for heating chocolate? Is there a right method for taffy pulling? Wait, what is taffy pulling? The candy world can be an intimidating place. I felt like I needed a sugar PhD just to get through one batch of fudge. But then I remembered that I was also scared the day I decided to quit my "safe" day job in finance so I could pursue my blog full time. Okay, maybe I was terrified. But I did it, and I never looked back. And guess what? It was the best decision I ever made.

Like blogging, candy making wasn't always easy for me. In fact, I felt like making candy was nearly impossible and left me feeling defeated. When I began several years ago, I quickly became frustrated at the lack of instructional detail and troubleshooting tips. Um, hello? The world was practically screaming for an easy candy-making book. That's when I decided to take matters into my own hands. I dove headfirst into candy land and began teaching myself through experience, advice from my peers, and plenty of mistakes. I burned pans, seized pounds of chocolate, lost a rubber spatula in The Great 2010 Melt (let's not talk about it), and made some funky brittle substance that nearly broke my teeth. My dentist loves that story.





I understand that the thought of candy making can be overwhelming. I get it, I've been there. But I wrote this book to help give you the confidence to make candy from scratch. If you want to learn how to make chewy taffy for your children, smooth truffles for a bake sale, old-fashioned fudge for your grandchildren, caramels for your friends, and chocolates for your sweetheart, let me help you. I've cooked my way through batches of toffee just so I can tell you what NOT to do. And, well, so I'd be able to eat really delicious homemade toffee. Please refer to the toffee goodness on [pages 104–111](#).

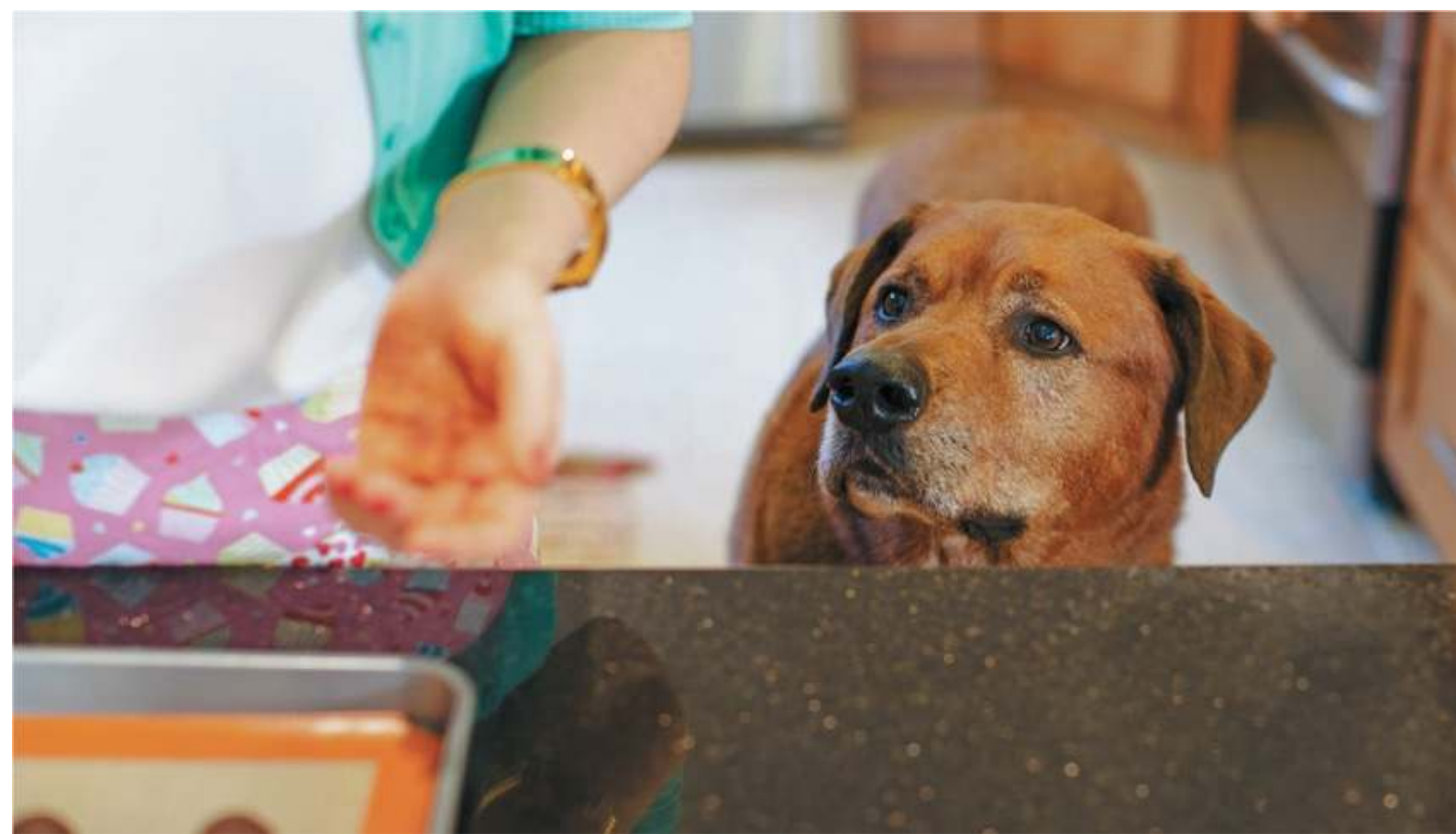




On the next few pages, you'll find information about key ingredients, essential equipment, and important candy-making basics. But I don't stop there! Sprinkled throughout the book are several how-tos and tricks to help build your candy-making confidence. Avoid disasters in the kitchen by taking the time to read my tips. These few minutes could save you from losing your mind, or worse, losing a spatula.



As for me, I'm proud to say that four years, three pea-size kitchens, and a wedding later, my blog is still my full-time job and it's better than ever. I've built up the courage and knowledge to connect with millions of readers. And I wouldn't trade it for the world. So do something that scares you. Maybe it will change your life. Maybe you'll get a little more confident in the kitchen. Maybe you'll get more confident in other parts of your life. Or maybe you'll just get to eat some homemade Lemon Cream Pie Truffles (see [page 88](#)).



The most important thing you need to know about making candy? Have fun. It's candy!



# GETTING STARTED

## SALLY'S KEY INGREDIENTS

**C**andy is very particular. There is no room for substitution in traditional candy recipes without sacrificing texture and flavor. Here is a close look at the most important ingredients used in this book.

**BAKING SODA:** Baking soda has a major role in the kitchen. It's used as a leavening agent in baked recipes that contain acid, such as chocolate chip cookies, which include acidic brown sugar and chocolate. It's also used in candy making. Sweets such as brittles and toffees accumulate acid from the browning reactions that occur during cooking. Baking soda is added at the end of the cooking time to react with the acid. This reaction creates rapid bubbles and foaming—remember your childhood volcano science project? It's just like that. The bubbles lighten the texture of the candy, making it easier to chew.

**BUTTER:** All of the recipes in this book calling for butter were tested with unsalted butter. If you substitute salted butter, reduce the salt used in the recipe (if any) by  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon per  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (1 stick; 114g) of butter. No need for fancy or expensive butter. I use the store brand or whatever is on sale.

**CANDY COATING:** When I refer to candy coating, I am referring to such ingredients as almond bark, candy wafers, and candy coating discs. My preferred coating is Wilton Candy Melts®. These little wafers come in a rainbow of colors and are available at candy supply shops, at craft stores, and online. Candy coating is used for decorating candies. It can also be used as a replacement for tempered or melted chocolate for dipping candies in these recipes. Candy coating comes in chocolate flavors, but these are not pure chocolate.

**CHOCOLATE:** Though we all love it, chocolate is a beast! This paragraph could get quite lengthy, so flip to [page 42](#) (Chocolate: Tempering, Melting, and Dipping) for all the important details on chocolate.

**CONFECTIONERS' SUGAR:** Confectioners' sugar is also known as powdered sugar, or icing sugar. It comes in handy when working with marshmallows and is one of the main ingredients in buttercream



candies, peanut butter cups, frostings, and other sweet delights.

**CORN SYRUP:** Corn syrup is sugar from corn. It is 100 percent glucose and, like all refined sweeteners it doesn't have an ideal nutritional profile. The corn syrup used in my candy recipes is not high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). HFCS starts with regular corn syrup but goes through an additional process to convert some of its glucose to fructose. I prefer to use Karo<sup>®</sup> Light Corn Syrup in my candy recipes because this brand does not contain HFCS. For organic, non-GMO (genetically modified organism) corn syrup, I like to use a brand called Wholesome Sweeteners<sup>®</sup>.

**HEAVY CREAM:** Heavy cream, also sold as whipping cream, has approximately 36 percent milk fat and is essential in caramel and truffle recipes, among others. Do not use half-and-half or light whipping cream. Double cream, with 48 percent milk fat, can be substituted.

**PEANUT BUTTER:** All the recipes in this book calling for peanut butter were tested with Jif<sup>®</sup> Creamy Peanut Butter or Skippy<sup>®</sup> Natural Creamy Peanut Butter. To obtain the proper texture and taste, it's important to use non-runny, non-oily peanut butters in these recipes.

**SUGAR:** When I refer to "sugar" in this cookbook, I am referring to granulated sugar. This is your everyday white sugar. It is used in dozens of recipes in this cookbook. Do not substitute brown sugar or any other kind of sugar for it in these candy recipes.

**SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK:** Sweetened condensed milk is sweetened milk from which water has been removed. It makes recipes such as Shortcut Chocolate Fudge (page 148) quick and easy. Though it's a simple ingredient, it's a little confusing with regard to measurement. Sweetened condensed milk is typically sold in 14-ounce (397g) cans. This ounce measurement refers to weight, not volume. So, one 14-ounce (397g) can is not almost 16 fluid ounces (2 cups). Rather, it is just over 8 fluid ounces (1 cup (240ml)). I prefer Eagle Brand<sup>®</sup> Sweetened Condensed Milk.

**VANILLA EXTRACT:** Vanilla extract is used for flavor. I strongly encourage you to use pure extract, not imitation, in the recipes in this cookbook.

## SALLY'S KITCHEN ESSENTIALS

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The recipes in this book were made with everyday kitchen equipment. Here's what you'll need to prepare them:

- ❖ 2 × 12-couat standard muffin pans
- ❖ 2 × 24-couat mini muffin pans
- ❖ 3 × large baking sheets
- ❖ 3–4 silicone baking mats (such as Silpa<sup>®</sup>)
- ❖ 8- and 9-in (20 and 23cm) square baking pans
- ❖ 9 × 2-in (23 × 5cm) deep-dish cake pan or 9-in (23cm) springform pan
- ❖ 9 × 13 in (23 × 33cm) glass or ceramic baking pan
- ❖ 12 × 17-in (30 × 43cm) jelly roll pan or similar-size rimmed baking sheet

- ✿ food processor or blender
- ✿ heatproof bowls
- ✿ ice cream maker
- ✿ kitchen shears
- ✿ liquid measuring cup (glass or plastic)
- ✿ lollipop/ice pop sticks
- ✿ mini muffin/cupcake liners
- ✿ nonstick cooking spray
- ✿ parchment or wax paper
- ✿ rubber spatulas
- ✿ sharp knives, including a sharp serrated knife
- ✿ small, medium, and large mixing bowls
- ✿ handheld or stand mixer with paddle and whisk attachments
- ✿ wire whisk
- ✿ wondra spoons
- ✿ zester

You will also need the following special equipment:

**CANDY THERMOMETER:** Do **not** fear the candy thermometer! It is one of the most important tools you will use in your candy making, ensuring consistency and success. Candy thermometers are similar to meat thermometers, except they read much higher temperatures—up to around 400°F (204°C). I prefer to use digital candy thermometers because they are easier to read and can be used for tempering chocolate (where you need 1-degree readings). Never let the bulb of the candy thermometer touch the bottom of the saucepan when in use, as you'll get an inaccurate reading. No matter what type of candy thermometer you choose, be sure to test it before use. To do this, simply clip the thermometer to a saucepan and boil some water. At sea level, water boils at 212°F (100°C). Each 500-foot (152m) increase in altitude lowers the boiling point by about 1 degree. If your thermometer reads above or below the boiling point for your location, make the necessary adjustments when cooking candy. My last piece of advice on this subject is to always have two candy thermometers on hand. You don't want to be caught in a situation where this vital tool breaks in the middle of cooking candy. Been there, done that.

**CHOCOLATE THERMOMETER:** A chocolate thermometer is typically glass and displays temperatures in 1-degree readings between 80°F (27°C) and 120°F (49°C). It is required for tempering chocolate. Alternatively, a tested digital candy thermometer can be used (see above).

**DIPPING TOOL:** Dipping candy such as truffles, caramels, and chocolates is one hundred times easier using a dipping tool. Not only will it make dipping less of a hassle, it will help make your finished candies more presentable and eye-catching. We all love pretty candy, don't we? See [page 42](#) (Chocolate: Tempering, Melting, and Dipping) for my preferred brand and information on how to use dipping tools.

**DOUBLE BOILER:** A double boiler is used for melting chocolate. For more information about melting chocolate in a double boiler, see [page 44](#) (Chocolate: Tempering, Melting, and Dipping).

**HEAVY-DUTY SAUCEPAN:** Surely you have a set of saucepans in your kitchen, but you might not have the proper saucepan for making candy. Make sure your pan holds at least 3 quarts (2.8L) and is on the heavy side with a thick bottom. This type of pan distributes heat evenly and carefully, which is key in preventing your candy from scorching. I own a few pricey copper pans because of the amount of candy I make. Heavy aluminum pans are also great.

**KITCHEN SCALE:** A gram is always a gram, an ounce is always an ounce, but a cup isn't always a cup. What I mean is, grams and ounces are accurate. There is no mistaking them. It's easy to over- or under-measure a cup of sugar, liquid sweetener, flour, etc., even by a teaspoon. This small mistake could pose a big problem in your finished candy. For this reason, a scale is the most-used tool in my kitchen, and I strongly advise you use one as well.



## HOW TO CLEAN A STICKY SAUCEPAN

I've scrubbed caramel, toffee, and hard candy off the same saucepans about 873 times. It's not always easy, and it's definitely not fun, but I've found a way that will save time (and preserve your sanity). When you're finished making sticky candy recipes—such as brittle, caramel, marshmallow, and toffee—on the stove, simply fill the saucepan with water until the water covers all of the candy residue. Place any utensils, such as spoons or knives that may have gotten dirty, inside the saucepan as well. Place the saucepan back on the stove over low heat. The warm water will simmer and melt the sugar off the sides of the saucepan. Pour out the warm water and let the saucepan and utensils sit in the sink until cool enough to handle and rinse clean. How easy is that?

**LIQUID MEASURING CUP:** The most common types of liquid measuring cups are glass or plastic, because you can see through them when you measure liquids using the measurement lines. Not only do I use liquid measuring cups for measuring liquids, I also use them for dipping candy in melted chocolate. The depth and shape of the liquid measuring cup makes the dipping process much easier.

**PASTRY BRUSH:** A pastry brush is essential to candy making. Its purpose is to help rid the saucepan of sugar syrup that may have splashed up along the sides. This sugar syrup can burn and crystallize, but running a water-moistened pastry brush around the inside of the pan helps prevent this from happening. Always keep a cup of warm water and a pastry brush near the stove as you are cooking.

When brushing down the sides, be extra aware that candy is highly volatile and may splash. I suggest wearing gloves as you do this. For more information about crystallization (candy's worst nightmare!) see Candy-Making Basics below. I strongly recommend using a pastry brush with natural bristles.

**SQUEEZE BOTTLE:** Squeeze bottles are used in this cookbook purely for looks. Maybe that's a little shallow? But it's a fact! Using a plastic squeeze bottle to drizzle warmed chocolate onto sweets looks neat and pretty. I own a couple of them and encourage you to as well. You can find them in the kitchen supply aisles of major grocery stores, at candy supply shops, kitchen supply shops, craft stores, and online. An alternative tool for drizzling would be a fork or spoon.



## SALLY'S CANDY-MAKING BASICS

**A**ll categories of candy are prepared differently; however, here is some general knowledge that will help get you ready for the candy recipes in this book.

**CANDY COOKING STAGES:** Though I always encourage the precision of a trusty candy thermometer, I've included a helpful chart on the opposite page to gauge your candy's doneness. To use this chart, simply drop a bit of the candy syrup from a clean spoon into a small glass bowl of very cold water and watch what happens.

**CRYSTALLIZATION:** Crystallization is what turns your smooth candy into a grainy mess. It's often caused by sugar crystals forming on the sides of the pan while the candy is cooking. This is why a pastry brush (see above) is essential in making candy. Scraping the pan clean when pouring the candy out also causes crystallization. When making things such as cookie dough and frosting, we usually want to scrape the bowl clean to get every last drop of goodness, right? Don't do that with candy. The bottom of the pan is exposed to the most heat, so the cooked candy at the bottom of the pan has a faster crystallization rate than the rest of the candy. This is especially true with fudge. Never scrape the pan clean.

**DOUBLING:** I do not recommend doubling the candy recipes in this cookbook. Increasing the quantities is sometimes a great idea when preparing treats in bulk, but the extra volume could prevent the candy from cooking properly. Make two separate batches instead.



**WEATHER:** Candy is very particular not only when it comes to ingredients (as I mentioned previously) but also with regard to weather. Sounds a little finicky, right? But it's the truth. Never cook candy on a humid day, as it will absorb moisture from the air, which can result in too-soft candies or crystallization. Cool, dry days are ideal.

## CANDY COOKING STAGES

SOFT BALL	234°F (112°C)–242°F (117°C)	A limp, sticky ball that can easily be flattened when removed from the water.
FIRM BALL	244°F (118°C)–248°F (120°C)	A sticky ball that has a little resistance when removed from the water.
HARD BALL	250°F (121°C)–266°F (130°C)	A hard ball that holds its shape, but is still pliable when removed from the water.
SOFT CRACK	270°F (132°C)–290°F (143°C)	Firm threads can be stretched or bent when removed from the water.
HARD CRACK	300°F (149°C)–310°F (154°C)	Stiff, firm threads that snap and break easily when removed from the water.



## CANT BEAT A CLASSIC

This chapter is my sugar-filled time capsule from the 1990s. When I was growing up, summers meant walking the boardwalk with a box of saltwater taffy in hand, unwrapping one piece after the other, until my jaw hurt from chewing. You know the feeling, right? Carnivals weren't complete without a candy apple, and campfire s'mores were eaten with double the marshmallow. Butter rum candies were as cozy as a warm hug, and peanut butter cups were the BEST part of my Halloween candy stash. This entire chapter is a stroll down memory lane, and my only hope is that in making these nine recipes, you will be filled with the same fuzzy feelings and nostalgia I experienced.

In terms of preparation, the candies in this chapter are all very different. A few of them, such as Cocoa Rum Balls ([page 23](#)) and Peanut Butter Cups ([page 32](#)), do not require a candy thermometer. Then there are more challenging recipes, such as Candy Apples ([page 24](#)) and Saltwater Taffy ([page 31](#)), that not only require a thermometer, but also a little patience. Trust me, if I have the patience to make these recipes, you have the talent to prepare them!

I end the chapter with a recipe that hasn't been around quite as long as the others in this section, but I have no doubt it's here to stay. Who doesn't enjoy eating cake pops as colorful as my childhood My Little Pony® collection?





# ◁ MARSHMALLOWS

**Prep time:** 35 minutes

**Total time:** 6 hours, 35 minutes

**Makes:** about 58 × 2-in (5cm) marshmallows

Store-bought marshmallows are no match for these soft and fluffy confections that are easy to make. Just remember that homemade marshmallows require several hours to set (overnight is best) so make sure you leave enough time before you get started.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup (40g) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 3 × 1/4oz (7g) package unflavored gelatin
- 1 cup (240ml) cold water, divided
- 1 cup (240ml) light corn syrup
- 1 1/2 cups (300g) sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT


- 9 × 13-in (23 × 33cm) glass or ceramic baking pan
- handheld or stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment
- 3-qt (2.8L) heavy-duty saucepan
- candy thermometer
- pastry brush

- 1 Generously spray the bottom and sides of a 9 × 13-in (23 × 33cm) glass or ceramic baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. (I do not suggest a metal pan, as it can affect the taste of your marshmallows.) Sift the confectioners' sugar and cornstarch together into a small bowl and sprinkle some of it very lightly all around the pan. Set remainder aside to use in steps 7 and 8.
- 2 Place the gelatin and 1/2 cup (120ml) of the water in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment. Whisk on low speed for 1 minute to briefly combine. Allow to sit as you cook the sugar syrup.
- 3 Place the remaining 1/2 cup (120ml) of water, corn syrup, sugar, and salt in a 3-qt (2.8L) heavy-duty saucepan over medium heat. Stir with a wooden spoon until the sugar has dissolved. Attach a candy thermometer to the pan. Remember not to let it touch the bottom of the pan. As the sugar

syrup begins cooking, brush down the sides of the pan with a water-moistened pastry brush to prevent burning there.

- 4 Without stirring, cook the sugar syrup until it reaches 240°F (116°C; soft ball stage). Turn the stove off and remove the pan from heat. Turn the mixer on low speed and slowly pour the hot syrup into the gelatin mixture. The syrup will be extremely hot, so be careful.
- 5 Gradually increase the mixer speed until it reaches high. Whip the mixture for 10–15 minutes, or until it is white, thick, and shiny (see inset photo, opposite). During the last minute of mixing, add the vanilla extract.
- 6 Pour/spoon the marshmallow into the prepared baking pan and smooth out the top with a rubber spatula. Allow it to sit uncovered at room temperature for at least 6 hours, preferably overnight.
- 7 Once completely firm, it is time to cut the marshmallows. Cover a large workstation with parchment or wax paper. Liberally sprinkle this surface, as well as the top of the marshmallow, with some of the remaining cornstarch/confectioners' sugar mixture. Using a sharp knife, loosen the edges of the marshmallow from the pan and invert the pan onto the prepared surface. Lift a corner of the pan and use your fingers to help peel the marshmallow away from the pan.
- 8 Using a sharp knife, cut the marshmallow into 2-in (5cm) squares, coating the knife blade with some of the leftover cornstarch/confectioners' sugar as needed. I find running the blade under hot water and wiping it dry with a towel helps make clean cuts as well. Roll the cut edges of the marshmallows in the cornstarch/confectioners' sugar mixture so they are no longer sticky.

**MAKE AHEAD TIP:** If you don't eat the marshmallows immediately, layer them between sheets of parchment or wax paper in an airtight container and store at room temperature in a cool, dry place for up to 1 week.

 **SALLY SAYS:** You can use these homemade marshmallows in a few recipes in *It's a Cookbook!*: Rocky Road Fudge ([page 140](#)), Fluffernutter Swirl Fudge ([page 44](#)), and Lucky Charms<sup>®</sup> Treats ([page 134](#)). Chocolate lovers, check out my cocoa version on [page 40](#)!



# ◁ COCOA RUM BALLS

**Prep time:** 45 minutes

**Total time:** 1 hour, 30 minutes

**Makes:** 40 balls

Shortly after I announced *Sally's Candy Addiction* on my blog, I received a few emails from readers asking if I'd be including rum balls. Though I wasn't planning on it, I of course couldn't get them out of my mind for weeks, so I finally whipped up a few test batches! The orange zest in this recipe is great for extra flavor, and it pairs wonderfully with the cocoa and rum. If you don't like coconut, you can use regular rum instead—or even your favorite bourbon. For a nonalcoholic treat, swap the rum for orange juice. My friends gobbled these rum balls right up. My only regret is not making them sooner! Thanks to my blog readers for keeping me up on all things delicious!

## BALLS

- 1 1/3 cups (145g) finely chopped raw unsalted pecans
- 38 Nilla<sup>®</sup> Wafers, ground into crumbs
- 1/2 cup (60g) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tbsp natural unsweetened or Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp honey, plus 1 tbsp if needed
- 1/4 cup rum (60ml), plus 1 tbsp if needed
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tsp orange zest

## COATING SUGGESTIONS

- Finely chopped pecans or hazelnuts
- Crushed Nilla<sup>®</sup> Wafers
- Natural unsweetened or Dutch-process cocoa powder
- Confectioners' sugar
- Chocolate sprinkles

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- large baking sheet
- food processor (recommended)

1 Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Spread chopped pecans on top and toast for 8 minutes. Allow to cool for 5 minutes before


handling. Set the lined baking sheet aside to use again in step 4.

2 In a large bowl, stir together the pecans, cookie crumbs, confectioners' sugar, and cocoa powder with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until combined. Add the honey, rum, vanilla extract, and orange zest and stir to combine. The mixture will be a little sticky. If you find it's more on the dry side, add 1 tablespoon (15ml) more of honey or rum. Chill the mixture in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before forming into balls (this will make the mixture easier to work with).

3 While the mixture is chilling, get your toppings ready and place into small bowls. You can use all some, or only one of the suggested toppings.

4 Remove chilled mixture from the refrigerator and, using a spoon or cookie scoop, shape into 1-in (2.5cm) balls. Roll into coating of choice and place onto the baking sheet. Repeat with remaining balls. Serve immediately or cover tightly and chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

**MAKE-AHEAD TIP:** These rum balls are a wonderful make-ahead dessert, because their cocoa, honey, and orange flavors intensify after a couple of days. Layer balls between sheets of parchment or wax paper and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks or in the freezer for up to 2 months.



**SALLY SAYS:** The easiest way to chop the pecans and crush the cookies is to use a food processor. If you do not own one, use a sharp knife to finely chop the pecans; to finely crush the cookies, place them in a large zipped-up bag, seal shut, and roll with a rolling pin.



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