

TURTLE CANDY RECIPE

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Follow our easy, step-by-step, photo illustrated recipe to learn how to make Homemade Turtle Candy. We're making our own caramel from scratch. Printable recipe included.



Pecan and Caramel Turtle Candy Recipe.

We're making our own caramel from scratch. It's really easy to do.



TURTLE CANDY

My cousin Carolyn shared this recipe for one of her favorite candies to make at Christmas time. I've always loved Turtles, so I was eager to get in the kitchen and try the recipe.

I must admit, it has been a bit of a learning experience for me. And, to be truthful, my first batch was pretty much a total failure. I overcooked the caramel and it turned out to be way too hard. It wasn't a total loss though, because I was able to break up the caramel and ended up eating a good part of the pieces that I salvaged from it. It reminded me of Sugar Daddy candy? Do you remember those?

It was my fault though. I had the recipe on my phone and once the caramel got to cooking, I let it cook up to what I "thought" was the correct temperature. I was about 40 degrees hotter than I was suppose to be. Go figure.

I did much better the second time around, so you can feel free to learn from my mistakes and not have to make them on your own. Smile. It will save you in the long run.

To top it all off, I had purchased a brand new candy thermometer just to make this candy with. How could I possibly mess things up with a new thermometer? Apparently it can happen.

Did you know that candy thermometers can function differently based on the altitude of where you live? Apparently, I wasn't aware of this. From my years of canning jams and jellies, I knew you had to

make adjustments with the processing times with those based on the altitude, but never considered such when making candy. Learn something new everyday as the old saying goes.

Water boils at 212F degrees. Bring a pot of water to a boil, then check the temperature on your thermometer. If it's showing more or less than 212F degrees, you will need to mentally make adjustments on the cooking temperatures for your candy. Adjust the temp up or down to coincide with the reading you get for boiling water. Make sense?

This second batch turned out much better. Still, it was a bit on the firm side and not the creamy caramel nougat that you might be accustomed to. So, don't give up hope. Practice makes perfect as they say, and just like me, you'll get better with each and every batch.

By the way, Carolyn's sister Agnes provided me with the recipe for **[Southern Potato Salad](#)** that you'll find here on Taste of Southern. Sadly, Agnes passed away recently, but we have lots of great memories to remember her by. Agnes and Carolyn use to make Christmas candies together I think. Both are great cooks.

Ready to give our Turtle Candy a try? Alright then, let's head on out to the kitchen, and... Let's Get Cooking!



Turtle Candy Recipe – You'll need these ingredients.

Please note that even though I'm showing Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips in this photo, which you can use, I ended up using Wilton's Light Cocoa Candy Melts to finish this recipe. Smile.



Prepare all of your ingredients ahead of time. Measure out the cream, sugar, corn syrup, salt, butter and the vanilla flavoring. All of these ingredients will go into making the caramel. Since you'll need to constantly stir the caramel as it's cooking, it will help greatly to have all the ingredients ready to be added when needed.



And, go ahead and prepare the pecan clusters so you'll have them ready once the caramel comes off the stove top. These steps are really important as everything happens quickly and you'll want to be prepared.

I'm using raw pecans in mine. You can arrange the clusters anyway you like of course. The pecans are suppose to give the look of a turtles head and legs sticking out around the caramel and chocolate shell. Just bunch them up in the center so you can coat them with the hot caramel.



You will need at least a 3 quart sauce pot to make the caramel. It will bubble up once it starts cooking and you don't want a mess all over the top of your stove. You can thank me later for that tip. Smile.

Begin, by placing the one cup of cream in your sauce pot. Place this over medium heat on your stove, and let it come up to a lukewarm temperature.

When you start seeing a few bubbles, POUR OUT half of the cream into a small cup and set it aside for a few minutes. We'll add it back in shortly.



After you've removed one half cup of the lukewarm cream, add the granulated sugar to the cream in the sauce pot.



Add the corn syrup.

If you spray your measuring cup with a bit of baking spray before you add the corn syrup, it will keep the corn syrup from sticking to your measuring cup. It will all pour out much easier.



Add the salt and immediately start stirring the ingredients in the pot. You are going to need to constantly stir this mixture throughout the entire process. This is why you needed all the ingredients measured out and ready to be added as you go.

I'll do my best with the photos, but I must admit, it got away with me quickly and I couldn't get all the photos that I would have liked to have taken. Just follow the steps and you'll be good. Smile.

Stirring constantly, let this mixture come up to a boil.



Once it begins to boil, keep stirring, and gradually add in the cream you removed earlier. Add it slow enough that you don't break the boil.

Now, this part can get messy if you don't watch it. The cream is going to start bubbling up and rising up in the sauce pot. Just continue to stir it to keep it stirred down and you shouldn't have any problems.

If it looks like it's about to boil over the top, quickly remove it from the heat for a second or two and it will settle back down. But, probably as long as you keep stirring it, it will not overflow your pot.

Continue to stir the pot and let this mixture boil for FIVE MINUTES.



After five minutes, gradually add the slices of butter. Again, don't do it so fast that you lose the boil. It will melt quickly after each addition so it will only take a few seconds before you can stir in another teaspoons worth of butter.

Place your candy thermometer in the pot if you haven't done so already. Don't let the thermometer touch the bottom of the pot, but keep it just off the bottom. Keep stirring and this part will take about 10 minutes or so to complete. Time will vary of course.

REDUCE HEAT. Continue to stir slowly and let the mixture come up to 245F degrees on the candy thermometer.

If you cook it beyond this temperature, it will be too hard. You must watch it closely until it reaches the proper temperature.



When the caramel reaches 245F degrees, immediately remove it from the heat.

ADD the VANILLA FLAVORING. Stir it in quickly and your caramel will start looking like caramel in the photo above. Let it cool for just a minute or two before you start spreading it over the pecan clusters.

You may need to stir it a time or two more as you work with it.



Use a teaspoon to drizzle the caramel over the center of the pecan clusters. Swirl it outwards as it flows off the spoon so it covers the biggest part of all of the pecans. It doesn't have to cover them completely. You want to have some of the pecans showing in the finished turtle.



Continue to drizzle caramel over the clusters until you have them all covered. I made 16 clusters with this batch. And, as you can see, I had some caramel left over. That's the snake looking thing on the right. Smile.

Once it begins to cool, you can take a spoon and scoop all the caramel left in the pot together pretty easily. Just twirl the spoon around in the caramel and it all should come out of the pot.

When it was cool enough to handle, I rolled out the remaining caramel into the log shape in the photo above. It will firm up and then I can cut it into portions to eat as is. It's good stuff.



Next, prepare your chocolate. As I mentioned at the beginning, I ended up using Wilton's Light Cocoa Candy Melts to top off the turtles. I went looking for more chocolate chips in my cabinet and spotted the candy melts. Turns out, I liked them much better than the chocolate chips I started out with. But, you can use the chocolate chips just as easily. They're less expensive than the candy melts, but they take longer to firm back up after you melt them.

To melt your chocolate pieces, place some in a small microwaveable bowl and place them in your microwave. Melt them in bursts of about 20 seconds each, stirring after each time you put heat to them. You do NOT want to melt them completely in the microwave. Just heat them enough to melt the few on the bottom of the bowl, and as you stir them, the rest will melt. Be patient, and you'll have great results. Only takes a burst or two of heat at about 15-20 seconds each.



Drop about a teaspoon of melted chocolate on top of the caramel in each cluster.

When you finish, set the pan aside to cool. Or, you can place it in the refrigerator to cool it quicker.



Enjoy!

These are great gift items, or great for serving your family and guests at your next get together.

As you can see, I cut a few slices off of the leftover caramel. These were pretty awesome on their own and it would be easy to make a big batch of just caramels to enjoy.

Once the caramel begins to warm in your mouth, it becomes much easier to "chew". But, don't forget, it's caramel and it just might stick to your teeth if you aren't careful. Just saying. Smile.