

# How can candy be so different?

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Lollipops from Dylan's Candy Bar are displayed at J.C. Penney in New York City. Photo: Mark Lennihan, AP

It is almost Halloween. It is a time for scary stories. It is a time for candy. Think about all the forms candy can come in. Some will be soft and chewy, like caramel. There will be gummies and lollipops. All of these sweets are made with sugar. So how can candy be so different? It is all about what happens to the tiny parts that make up sugar.

Alton Brown is a chef on TV. He knows the secret to making candy. It is "controlling the size and shape of sugar crystals."

## How Candies Are Made

Each tiny piece of sugar is a crystal. A crystal is hard like a rock. It is made up of tiny building blocks. These blocks make a pattern. They fit together in the same way again and again. These blocks are called sucrose. Sucrose likes to stick to other sucrose. This is how the crystal pattern is made. When sugar gets wet, some sucrose bits want to stick to the water. They fall out of the

pattern. They melt. Hot water can melt more sugar than cold water. Melted sugar turns into a syrup. It is like sweet water. Crystals are made when the syrup cools down. That is how many candies are made.



The feel of candy depends on sugar crystals. Different candies have different sizes of crystals. Chefs can make different sugar crystals. They do this by cooling sugar syrup at different speeds. Cool it slowly. This will give you big crystals. The biggest crystals make rock candy.

## Rock Candy And Lollipops

What is the opposite of rock candy? It is candy that has no sugar crystals at all. It is called glass candy. Lollipops are a kind of glass candy. It is made by cooling syrup fast. The sucrose sticks together quickly. It is not the same each time. No crystal pattern is formed.

Chewy candy is in the middle. It has lots of tiny crystals. Chefs do this by cooling syrup slowly. They have to stir as it cools.

Alton Brown says the feel of candy is important. He thinks we like the feel of our favorite candy. We like it more than the taste.