How to Make Rock Candy
Here’s how to make old-fashioned rock candy.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of water
- 3 cups of sugar
- Food coloring (optional)
- Flavoring (optional)

Steps

1. Start a pot of water boiling on the stove.

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2 Twist a piece of cotton string (or a pipe cleaner) around the middle of the stick. The cotton string should be long enough so that when the stick is placed over the top of the glass, the string will hang just short of the bottom.

3 Wet the string with a little water and roll it in the sugar.
4. Lay the stick over the top of the glass jar so that the string hangs down inside the jar, but doesn’t touch the bottom of the jar.

5. When the water has started boiling, remove it from the heat and let the water settle.
Stir in the sugar one half cup at a time. Continue adding the sugar until it starts collecting at the bottom of the pot and will not dissolve even when you stir. This will take a while and a good bit of sugar but not too much.

If you want to add flavoring or color, stir it in now.
8. Pour the sugary syrup solution into the glass until it is about 1 inch (2.5cm) from the top.

9. Place the pencil over the jar and allow the string to dangle into the solution. Don't let the string settle on the bottom or sides of the glass.
10 Place the glass somewhere where it can sit for a while undisturbed (but do not refrigerate it). After a day or so, you should start to see crystal growth forming on the string.

11 Leave the string in the solution until the crystals are big enough for your liking or they have completely stopped growing.
12 Remove the string from the glass and let dry.

13 After it dries, wait until the crystal is formed. You have a choice now to either eat the rock candy or keep it.

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• Natural fiber string like cotton or twine will work best. Nylon fiber and other polymer string will not stimulate crystal growth very well. Or you can use sticks (do not get the colored ones because the dye may not be edible!).

• A common water to sugar ratio is 1 to 2. For example, 1 cup of water to 2 cups of sugar.

• For color and flavor, add some dry powdered Kool-Aid.

• To make colored/flavored crystals, you can add food dye/flavoring when you add the sugar.

• If you want the crystals to grow larger, let a little air into the jar by raising the lid (you can rest it on a couple of pencils balanced on the jar rim).

• Try adding peppermint extract and red food coloring.

• Glass jars with a hole cut in the lid work great and keep dust from settling into the solution. If you are using a normal glass, you can cover the top with tin foil.

• If the string keeps floating, you can weigh the end down with something. Small pieces of store bought rock candy work best and will make your own crystals start to grow faster.

• To add some flavor, you can add a few drops of lemon or lime juice (or other flavors) or tie a small piece of hard candy at the bottom of the string, like a piece of a peppermint or cinnamon candy.

• If you do not see any crystals growing on the string after a day or so, remove the pencil and string, pour the sugar mixture into a small pot (the one used to boil the water) bring the mixture to a boil, turn off the heat, and try to mix in more sugar. If more sugar does mix in, you did not add enough when you were mixing in the corn syrup at the beginning. Allow the mixture to cool down, and cover the string in sugar again. Pour it in your glass container, and only place the sugar covered string in the container when the sugar does not fall off the string when you try to move it off. The sugar should feel like if it was glued onto the string. Finally, leave the mixture to be undisturbed for a few days. You might even see crystal growth in less than a day after doing said steps.

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Warnings
• Too much sugar is bad for your teeth, and other parts of your body. Only have one piece of rock candy a day, and drink some water after you eat it.
• Do not mess with the jar or put your fingers in it. This disrupts the forming process of the crystalline structure. It may not prevent it from working, but it will hinder the progress of the crystal growth.
• Make sure that an adult is supervising as the child is performing this project, because it involves boiling water. It is very hot and you do not want to burn yourself. Let the adult do the boiling water part if you are still young.

Things You'll Need

String (or pipe cleaner)
Stick (or pencil)
Paper clip or washer
Jar (Glass or plastic)
Saucepan
Spoon (for stirring)
Food coloring (optional)

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