

Sugar Crystals for Rock Candy

Rock Candy Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 3 cups table sugar (sucrose)
- clean glass jar
- pencil or butter knife
- string
- pan or bowl for boiling water and making the solution
- spoon or stirring rod

How to Grow Rock Candy

1. Gather your materials.
2. You might want to grow a seed crystal, a small crystal to weight your string and provide a surface for larger crystals to grow on. A seed crystal isn't necessary as long as you're using a rough string or yarn.
3. Tie the string to a pencil or butter knife. If you have made a seed crystal, tie it to the bottom of the string. Set the pencil or knife across the top of the glass jar and make sure that the string will hang into the jar without touching its sides or bottom. However, you want the string to hang nearly to the bottom. Adjust the length of the string, if necessary.
4. Boil the water. If you boil your water in the microwave, be very careful removing it to avoid getting splashed.
5. Stir in the sugar, a teaspoonful at a time. Keep adding sugar until it starts to accumulate at the bottom of the container and won't dissolve even with more stirring. This means your sugar solution is saturated. If you don't use a saturated solution, then your crystals won't grow quickly. On the other hand, if you add too much sugar, new crystals will grow on the undissolved sugar and not on your string.
6. If you want colored crystals, stir in a few drops of food coloring.
7. Pour your solution into the clear glass jar. If you have undissolved sugar at the bottom of your container, avoid getting it in the jar.
8. Place the pencil over the jar and allow the string to dangle into the liquid.
9. Set the jar where it can remain undisturbed. If you like, you can set a coffee filter or paper towel over the jar to prevent dust from falling into the jar.
10. Check on your crystals after a day. You should be able to see the beginnings of crystal growth on the string or seed crystal.
11. Let the crystals grow until they have reached the desired size or have stopped growing. At this point, you can pull out the string and allow the crystals to dry. You can eat them or keep them.