

Easy Homemade Turtles Candy Recipe

Our easy Homemade Turtles are made with chewy caramel, toasted pecans, and rich chocolate for one of the BEST Christmas candy recipes that you really can (and should!) enjoy all year round. They can be made without a candy thermometer in under 30 minutes for a fun treat that makes a great edible gift for friends and neighbors!



★★★★★
4.79 from 38 votes

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
25 mins	5 mins	30 mins

Course: Dessert Cuisine: American Diet: Gluten Free
Servings: 24 -30 turtles Author: Amy Nash

Equipment

- baking sheets
- parchment paper

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups **whole pecan halves**
- 1 (11-ounce) package **soft caramels** unwrapped (about 55 caramels)
- 3 Tablespoons **evaporated milk** half-and-half, or cream
- 1 (11.5-ounce) package **milk chocolate chips** (about 2 cups)
- 2 teaspoons **coconut oil** or shortening
- **Maldon flaky salt** for decorating (optional)

Instructions

1. Start by toasting the pecans on a baking sheet in a 350°F oven for 8-10 minutes or on the stovetop over medium heat stirring the pecans occasionally for 3-5 minutes until slightly darkened and the nuts start to smell fragrant and warm. Be careful not to burn them. Let the pecans cool before handling.

2 1/2 cups whole pecan halves

2. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper. Spray the parchment paper lightly with cooking spray, then arrange clusters of 3-5 pecans spaced apart slightly from each other for each turtle. Alternately, you can chop your pecans and make small piles of about 1 tablespoon each of the chopped pecans. Consider reserving a handful of whole pecan halves for decorating the tops of each turtle.

3. In a medium bowl, combine the unwrapped caramels and evaporated milk, half-and-half, or cream. Microwave in 20-second bursts of heat, stirring between each interval, until melted and smooth. At first it won't look like it's working, but after 2-3 minutes the caramels will melt smoothly. Set aside to cool slightly.

1 (11-ounce) package soft caramels, 3 Tablespoons evaporated milk

4. Spoon 2-3 teaspoons of the warm caramel over the pecan clusters, trying to make sure it touches all of the nuts to hold them together.

5. Melt the chocolate chips and coconut oil in a medium bowl by microwaving with 20-second bursts of heat again. Stir between each interval, stopping when the chocolate is almost fully melted but not completely so you don't overheat the chocolate. Continue to stir until the chocolate is fully melted.

1 (11.5-ounce) package milk chocolate chips, 2 teaspoons coconut oil

6. Spoon 2-3 teaspoons of melted chocolate over each cluster of caramel and nuts, swirling the top with the back of your spoon for a decorative finish.

7. If desired, press a whole toasted pecan in the top of the chocolate or sprinkle with some flaky Maldon salt before the chocolate has a chance to firm up. Let the candy set until the chocolate firms up completely before removing the turtles from the parchment paper. If the caramel is sticking to the parchment paper too much, try sticking them in the freezer for 10-15 minutes and the caramel should release easily after that.

Maldon flaky salt

Notes

- **Storage:** Keep the turtles in an airtight container or in the fridge for up to 2-3 weeks with a layer of parchment or waxed paper between them. They are fine at room temperature for 1-2 weeks if your house is cool, but they usually do best in the fridge.
- **Freezing:** These freeze beautifully for at least 2-3 months in an airtight container. Just let them thaw on the counter for 30-60 minutes to warm up before enjoying.
- **Caramel:** I used Kraft caramels, but Peter's or Werther's would also work. If you want to make the caramel from scratch, my favorite caramel recipe for turtles is the one in my Chocolate Caramel Pretzel Bark recipe.
- **Chocolate:** I used good old Nestle Tollhouse milk chocolate chips, but Ghiradelli or Guittard also make excellent chips. Or you could chop up a bar of milk chocolate (we like the Pound Plus bars from Trader Joe's) and use that instead.
- **Pecans:** Really you could make these turtles with any nut you like, or if you have a nut allergy, I love subbing chopped pretzels for pecans.
- **Toasting pecans:** But you can also toast pecans in a clean pan on the stovetop over medium heat by stirring the pecans occasionally for 3-5 minutes until slightly darkened and the nuts start to smell fragrant and warm. Be careful not to burn them. Let the pecans cool before handling.
- **Fully-coated turtles:** You can freeze the caramel and pecan centers, then dip them so they are fully covered in chocolate. You will probably need double the amount of chocolate though so you don't run out. These are less sticky and messy once finished, but they don't look quite as much like traditional turtles.

Nutrition

Calories: 159kcal | Carbohydrates: 16g | Protein: 2g | Fat: 11g | Saturated Fat: 3g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 3g | Monounsaturated Fat: 4g | Cholesterol: 3mg | Sodium: 36mg | Potassium: 74mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 13g | Vitamin A: 14IU | Vitamin C: 1mg | Calcium: 28mg | Iron: 1mg

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