

Crafting with Chocolate

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How to Make a Marbled Chocolate Box 12 Easy Steps

Ingredients

- 3 ½ packed cups of semi-sweet chocolate pieces or shavings
- ½ cup of white chocolate pieces or shavings

Note: For best results, use a quality bar chocolate, such as Ghirardelli. Do not use chocolate chips or morsels – these kinds of chocolate are meant to keep their shape when used for baking and do not maintain a smooth texture when melted.

Tools

- Double boiler (You can create a double boiler by placing a metal or glass bowl on top of a pot 1/3 filled with water. Make sure that the bottom of the bowl is not touching the water.)
- Chocolate or Candy Thermometer (must have a range of at least 75° through 120°)
- Rubber Spatula
- Parchment Paper
- Toothpick
- Paintbrush

Step 1: Set up your double boiler and set the heat to low. Put the 3 ½ cups of semi-sweet chocolate pieces into the bowl to melt. Make sure the bottom of the bowl is not touching the water. The hot steam from the water will begin to melt the chocolate. Water should be steaming, do not let it reach boiling (this will scorch the chocolate). Use the rubber spatula to stir the chocolate periodically so that it melts evenly.

Step 2: Check the temperature of the chocolate periodically. Fully melted chocolate should be between 107° and 110°. Do not let the temperature reach above 113°.

Step 3: Once the chocolate is fully melted, remove the bowl from atop the pot quickly and wipe off any condensation that has collected on the bottom of the bowl. Remember, the bowl will be very hot! Be extremely careful not to allow any water or steam to get into the chocolate.

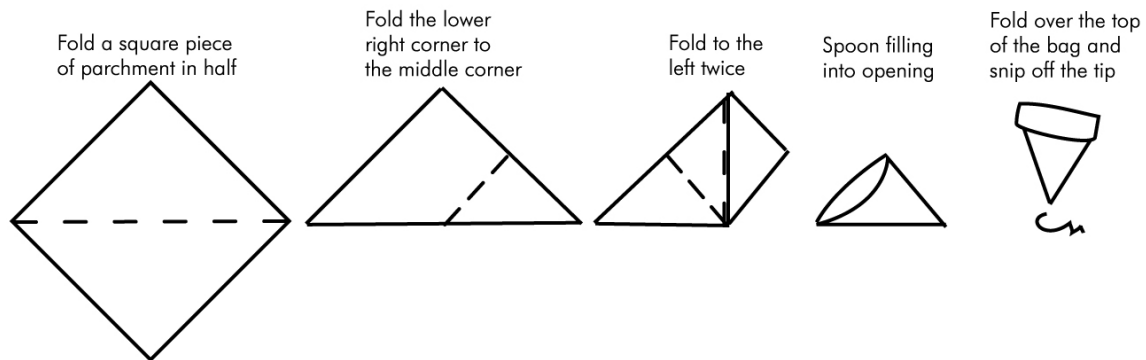
Even the smallest drop of water will cause the melted chocolate to separate and become lumpy. If this happens, add 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil and stir. Repeat as necessary.

Step 4: Pour the chocolate into the center of the parchment paper and spread it as smoothly as possible into a rectangle with dimensions of 10½ x 20 inches, with a thickness of about ¼ inch. (It helps to mark the dimensions on the reverse side of the parchment paper beforehand.) Make the surface of the chocolate as even, smooth and without creases as you can. **Note:** As the chocolate cools, it becomes more difficult to smooth evenly, so once you pour it onto the parchment, be sure to start spreading it right away.

Step 5: Set up the double boiler with a clean, **completely dry** bowl. Add additional water to the pot if necessary. Set the heat on low and add the ½ cup of white chocolate pieces. Stir with a clean, completely dry spatula until melted. **Note:** White chocolate is softer than semi-sweet chocolate and will melt considerably faster.

Step 6: Once the white chocolate is completely melted, remove the bowl from atop the pot quickly and wipe off any condensation that has collected on the bottom of the bowl. Again, remember, the bowl will be very hot!

Step 7: With a square piece of parchment paper, make a pastry bag. Pour the white chocolate into the pastry bag and cut off the bottom corner to create a small hole. Pipe thin diagonal stripes of white chocolate onto the semi-sweet chocolate.



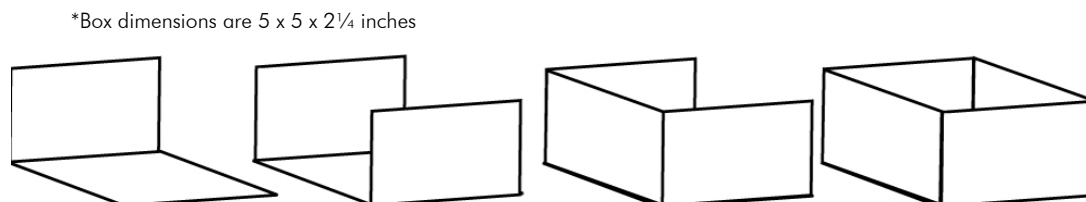
Step 8: Drag a toothpick crosswise through the stripes of white chocolate to create a marbled effect. Marble the entire slab of chocolate.

Step 9: Chill chocolate in refrigerator for 15 minutes, then remove from refrigerator and allow to set for 15 more minutes.

Step 10: With an unserrated large knife, using cardboard cutouts as a guide, carefully cut out the 6 pieces that you will use to assemble the box. If any of the pieces crack, use melted semi-sweet chocolate to “glue” the broken pieces back together. Hold broken pieces together with melted chocolate until chocolate hardens and sets. The repaired piece can also be chilled to speed up the hardening process.

Note: Try not to touch the chocolate pieces with your hands for long periods of time. The heat from your hands will soften the chocolate and fingerprints will be visible. Use a spoon or a butter knife to keep the pieces in place as they set.

Step 11: Assemble the box. The marbled side of the chocolate cutouts should be facing outwards. Use melted chocolate to glue the pieces together as shown in the diagram below. **Be sure not to seal the box closed**, leave one of the large square pieces to serve as the box cover. If necessary, the box can be reinforced by lining its inside edges with a little extra melted chocolate. Allow the melted chocolate to harden.



Step 12: Decorate the box cover. Be creative! There are many ways to do this. A simple method is to cut some of the remaining marbled chocolate into 3 or 4 1-inch squares. Stack them on top of each other and glue them together, and then glue them to the center of the chocolate box cover to create a “handle”. Allow to set and place box cover on top of chocolate box.