

TYPES OF SUGARS

All sugar is made by first extracting sugar juice from sugar beet or sugar cane plants, and from there many types of sugar can be produced. Through slight adjustments in the process of cleaning, crystallizing and drying the sugar and varying the level of molasses, different sugar varieties are possible. Sugars of varying crystal sizes produce unique functional characteristics that make the sugar suitable for different foods and beverages. Sugar color is primarily determined by the amount of molasses remaining on or added to the crystals, giving pleasurable flavors and altering moisture. Heating sugar also changes the color and flavor (yum, caramel!). Some types of sugar are used only by the food industry and are not available in the supermarket.

See below for a few facts about some of the various types of sugar.

WHITE SUGARS (contain little or no molasses)

Granulated sugar (Table sugar)

- + “Regular” or granulated sugar is what you typically find in your sugar bowl
- + Granulated sugar is the most common sugar called for in recipes when cooking and baking
- + “Regular” sugar granules are fine because small crystals are ideal for bulk handling and not susceptible to caking

Powdered sugar

- + Powdered or confectioners sugar is simply granulated sugar ground to a smooth powder, mixed with a small amount of cornstarch to prevent caking and then sifted
- + Powdered sugar is often used in icings, confections and whipping cream
- + You can make it at home: blend 1 cup white sugar and 1 tablespoon cornstarch to get 1 cup of powdered sugar

Sanding sugar

- + Used mainly in baking and confectionery as a sprinkle on top of baked goods, sanding sugar can have large or fine crystals
- + This sugar reflects light and gives the products a sparkling appearance



BROWN SUGARS (contain varying levels of molasses)

Light and Dark Brown sugar

- + Brown sugars are made by mixing white sugar with various amounts of molasses
- + Light brown sugar is often used in sauces and most baked goods
- + Dark brown sugar has a deeper color and stronger flavor than light brown sugar. The rich, full flavor makes it ideal for gingerbread, baked beans, barbecuing and other full-flavored foods
- + Brown sugars tend to clump because they contain more moisture than white sugars, allowing baked goods to retain moisture well and stay chewy

Turbinado sugar

- + Turbinado sugar, sometimes known as Demerara sugar or Raw cane sugar, is a partially processed sugar which retains more of the naturally present molasses
- + It has a blond color, mild brown sugar flavor and larger crystals than brown sugars used in baking
- + Turbinado sugar is the sugar in your packet of “raw cane sugar.” This type of sugar has been processed just enough to make it safe to eat

Muscovado sugar

- + Muscovado sugar, also known as Barbados sugar, is an unrefined cane sugar in which the molasses has not been removed
- + This sugar is very dark brown in color and has a particularly strong molasses flavor
- + Muscovado sugar crystals are slightly coarser and stickier than regular brown sugar, giving it a sandy texture