

Pumpkin Seed Brittle



Carving a Jack-o-Lantern this October? Don't throw away those seeds—Use them to make pumpkin seed brittle!

Making Pumpkin Seed Brittle is fun way for children to learn about pumpkin anatomy while engaging in a unique sensory experience, discovering the science behind turning liquid into candy glass, and enjoying the accomplishment of creating a sweet treat!



Supplies

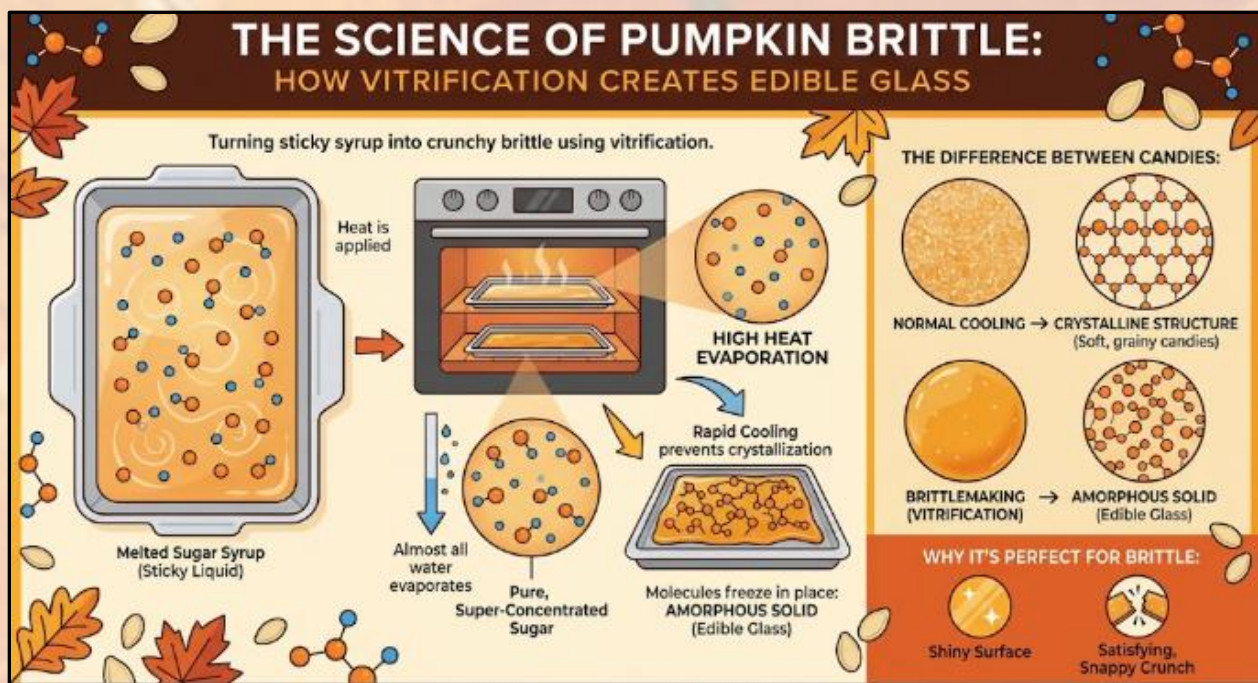
Fresh pumpkin seeds
Large bowl
Colander
Paper towels
Medium pot
Mixing spoon
Mixing bowl & whisk
Baking sheet
Parchment paper
2 cups fresh pumpkin seeds
1 egg white
2 tbsp brown sugar
1 tbsp melted butter
1 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp vanilla extract
¼ tsp salt

Steps

1. Cut the top off your pumpkin and scoop the pulp and seeds out of your pumpkin into a large bowl filled with cold water. Have children stir the water with their hands, gently rubbing the seeds to help remove the pulp—the seeds will float to the top while the stringy pulp sinks to the bottom. Scoop the seeds off the top and into a colander.
2. Bring a pot of water to a boil with 1 tsp salt. Add the rinsed seeds and simmer for 10 minutes, then drain. This crucial step cooks the hard outer hull so the final snack is tender and crispy rather than tough.
3. Spread the boiled seeds in a single layer over dish towels or paper towels. Pat them thoroughly dry. Removing surface moisture ensures the cinnamon-sugar coating sticks and turns crispy instead of soggy.
4. In a mixing bowl, whisk the egg white until frothy, then stir in the melted butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, vanilla, and salt. Add the dried seeds and toss until completely coated.
5. Preheat your oven to 300°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread the coated seeds onto the baking sheet. Use the back of a spoon to press them together into one flat, connected layer. Bake for 30–35 minutes until light golden brown and fragrant.
6. Remove from the oven and let the pan cool completely for 15–20 minutes (the coating hardens as it cools). Once set, let children snap the sheet into crunchy, bite-sized brittle pieces and enjoy!

Opportunities for Expanded Learning

When you bake your pumpkin seeds in the sweet syrup glaze, you are using heat to trigger a scientific phase change called vitrification—turning a sticky liquid into a sheet of solid "edible glass." Normally, as melted sugar cools down, its molecules love to clump together into neat, organized geometric patterns called crystals (which is how soft, grainy candies or rock candies are made). However, with our pumpkin brittle, the high heat of the oven evaporates almost all the water out of the syrup, leaving behind pure, super-concentrated sugar. As the baking sheet cools back down to room temperature, the sugar molecules freeze in place so fast that they don't have enough time or moisture to line up into crystals. Instead, they get trapped in a disorganized, rigid structure known as an amorphous solid. That hard, non-crystalline state is what gives your finished brittle its shiny surface and that satisfying, snappy crunch when you break it into pieces!



Learn more about pumpkin anatomy with SciShow Kids [here](#)!

Discover why pumpkins are orange with Mystery Science [here](#)!

Explore more about the science of cooking with WonderKids Academy [here](#)!

