



## *Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Caramel Corn*

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### *Tips and Time Savers*

- Use fresh-popped popcorn. Stale popcorn makes sad caramel corn, and we don't do sad snacks.
- Don't skip the baking soda—it helps the caramel puff and coat more evenly.
- Stir carefully but thoroughly when mixing the caramel into the popcorn. Gloves or silicone spatulas are your best friends here.
- Bake low and slow, stirring every few minutes. This is what keeps it crunchy instead of tacky.
- Let it cool completely before storing. Warm caramel corn in a container = steamy disaster.
- If you're gifting it, line the tin or bag with wax paper to keep things neat and less clingy than your toddler with a cold.

### *Variations*

- Add a pinch of cayenne or smoked paprika to the caramel for a little kick.
- Toss in peanuts, pecans, or almonds before baking for a Cracker Jack moment.
- Drizzle cooled caramel corn with melted chocolate or white chocolate for an extra indulgent touch.
- Swap vanilla for maple extract or bourbon for a richer, grown-up vibe.
- Add crushed pretzels or cereal to the popcorn before adding the caramel for extra texture and chaos.

### *Storage*

- Store cooled caramel corn in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks (but let's be real—it won't last that long).
- Avoid humidity like it's your cousin's MLM party invite. Moisture ruins the crunch.
- For gifting, use tins, cellophane bags, or mason jars with a tight seal.
- Do not refrigerate or freeze unless you want limp, chewy corn that tastes like betrayal.

# FAQs

## **Can I use microwave popcorn?**

Sure, but skip the buttered kind unless you want your caramel corn to taste like regret and movie theater floors. Use plain, unflavored popcorn for best results.

## **Why did my caramel corn turn out chewy instead of crunchy?**

It likely didn't bake long enough or didn't get stirred while baking. Caramel needs time to crisp in the oven—don't rush it. This isn't a first date; low and slow wins.

## **Do I have to use corn syrup?**

Yes. This is not the time to get experimental. Corn syrup keeps the caramel from crystallizing and turning into sadness.

## **What does the bacon grease do?**

It adds a smoky, delicious flavor that you can't get any other way. If you want to use all butter instead of bacon grease you can but I suggest you try this at least once!

## **How long does homemade caramel corn last?**

If stored in an airtight container in a cool, dry place, it'll stay crisp for up to 2 weeks. If it lasts that long, congratulations on your restraint.

## **Can I freeze caramel corn?**

Technically yes, but it's not ideal. The texture can suffer. You're better off storing it sealed and dry on the counter like a civilized snack goblin.

## **Can I add nuts or chocolate?**


Absolutely. Toss in peanuts, pecans, or a drizzle of chocolate once it's cooled if you're feeling extra. Just don't blame me when you eat the entire tray.

## *Popcorn measurement*

- ¼ cup unpopped kernels = 8 cups popped popcorn
- 1/3 cup unpopped kernels = 10 cups popped popcorn
- ½ cup unpopped kernels = 16 cups popcorn
- 2/3 cup unpopped kernels = 20 cups popcorn
- ¾ cup unpopped kernels = 24 cups popcorn
- 1 cup unpopped kernels = 32 cups popcorn

## *Nice to have*

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[Available here – and yes, it's worth every crunchy bite.](https://www.restlesschipotle.com/caramel-corn-recipe/)