



How to temper chocolate

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Tempering chocolate is essential when you're making chocolate-coated desserts or sweets to ensure you're able to bring out the best flavours of the chocolate, and when it sets you'll have chocolate with an attractive sheen that snaps perfectly. While it is a vital trick of the trade for chocolatiers the world over, tempering chocolate is definitely not as difficult as many people believe.

What is tempered chocolate?

Tempered chocolate has gone through a process where your chocolate is melted and then cycles between heating and cooling to help create a mixture that is smooth and glossy at room temperature. Tempered chocolate tends to set quite quickly and most bars of chocolate have gone through a tempering process during production, giving them their shiny appearance. Tempering should not be done prior to baking as the heat in the oven renders the tempering process pointless.

Do I need any special tools to temper chocolate properly?

While traditional methods of tempering chocolate rely on using a thermometer to ensure your mixture hits specific temperatures, you definitely do not need to buy one to go through the process effectively.

How to temper chocolate

If you're wanting to take your desserts to a whole new level or make use of a block of chocolate that has bloomed, then tempering chocolate will be a handy trick to have up your sleeve. As this process relies on temperature changes it is recommended that you do it in a kitchen that is room temperature or below with low humidity.

What you'll need

Chocolate (in two batches, or your bloomed chocolate plus a block of non-bloomed chocolate)

A metal bowl

A medium saucepan (Your bowl should fit snugly in)

A rubber or silicone spatula

A tea towel

Optional: A dessert thermometer

Instructions

1. Half-fill your saucepan with water and bring it up to a rapid simmer.
2. With your [NEFF Gas cooktop, use Flameselect](#) to reduce the temperature to its lowest setting. The tiny flame will be just enough to ensure your water stays at the correct temperature throughout the process. Otherwise, if using a different stove. Remove from the heat entirely but be conscious that you may need to return it to a low heat to ensure the optimum temperature is met.
3. Start melting your chocolate. Put half your chocolate in your bowl and place it over the water. The water should not be touching the bottom of your bowl or be able to get into your chocolate mixture.
4. Let it sit, uncovered over the saucepan until it is approximately 2/3 melted.
5. Carefully stir the chocolate to encourage the remaining 1/3 to melt and for the general temperature to cool, without letting any of the water into the bowl.
6. Test the temperature of your chocolate. If using a thermometer you want it to be reduced to about 40-45°C, otherwise place a dab of chocolate just below your bottom lip to check the temperature. It should be warm enough to sting slightly without burning.
7. Remove the bowl from the water and place it on your bench on top of a folded tea towel to collect any condensation that has collected on the bottom of your bowl.
8. Add your remaining chocolate. Stir slowly and gently until the chocolate is completely melted. It will thicken and become less shiny as it cools. This process can take a while, so if you want to speed up the process you can place the bowl in an ice bath or move to a cooler room.
9. Test the temperature again. This time, you want it to be cooled to approximately 28 – 32°C for perfectly tempered chocolate. It should be slightly cool when dabbed below your bottom lip.

If your chocolate temper stops being shiny and becomes matte, or too thick to stir properly, it means it has cooled too much and you may need to return it to the saucepan to return it to a higher temperature.

NOTE: Ensure your bowl is completely dry before starting as any water residue in the bowl will seize up the chocolate.

Notes
