



RECIPE: *Buckeyes*

Yield: 150 candies

- 1 pound unsalted butter, softened
- 2 pounds confectioners sugar
- 4 cups smooth or crunchy peanut butter
- 1 cup ground pecans (optional)
- 2 12-ounce bags good quality semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ¼ cup all-vegetable shortening
- Spiral candy dipping spoon or toothpicks
- Waxed paper

In the 6-quart bowl of a stand mixer cream the butter, then add half of the confectioners sugar and half of the peanut butter. Mix on the lowest setting to combine then mix on high to thoroughly incorporate. Repeat with the remaining sugar and peanut butter. Mix in the pecans, if using. (You can also mix these by hand in a large bowl if you don't have a 6-quart mixing bowl; it will, however, require some serious elbow grease!) Cover and chill until firm, 2–3 hours or overnight.

Line two large baking sheets with waxed paper and roll the peanut butter mixture into walnut-sized balls, working quickly with cool, dry hands. As soon as all the candies have been rolled, place the baking sheets in the refrigerator while you melt the chocolate.

In a double-boiler set over 3 inches of water, melt the semi-sweet chips and shortening slowly over low heat to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. If you don't have a double-boiler, you can use a large, heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of water—just make sure that the base of the bowl fits snugly against the sides of the saucepan so that it remains suspended at least two inches above the waterline. When the chocolate is melted, dip each candy using a spiral spoon or toothpicks, swirling quickly to thoroughly coat. Drop candies onto the waxed paper to cool. Be careful not to allow any water to come in contact with the chocolate—even from steam—as this will cause it to seize or clump. (If this happens, simply stir in another teaspoon or two of shortening.) Cool candies at room temperature for 2 hours.

The candies may be stored in tins or airtight containers in the refrigerator for up to three weeks.

Note: Keep in mind that you really do want the best chocolate you can afford for this recipe—inferior chocolate has additives which can interfere with the melting process. Also, the temperature of the chocolate is important—if it's not warm enough it won't coat the candies. But if it is too warm it will cause the butter to melt and break them down.