

Kettle Corn

Make authentic homemade kettle corn with this easy recipe! Sweet, salty, and perfectly crispy - just like the fairground favorite. Ready in 15 minutes.

5 min

PREP

10 min

COOK

15 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1 Test the oil temperature**

Heat 1/4 cup vegetable oil in a large heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Add 3-4 popcorn kernels and cover with the lid.
- 2** Wait until the test kernels pop completely, then remove them with a spoon and discard.
- 3 Add popcorn and sugar**

Add the remaining 1/2 cup popcorn kernels to the hot oil. Immediately sprinkle 1/4 cup granulated sugar evenly over the kernels and stir quickly with a wooden spoon to coat.
- 4** Cover the pot with the lid and shake gently back and forth over the burner. Continue shaking every 30 seconds to prevent the sugar from burning and ensure even popping.
- 5** Remove the pot from heat when the popping slows to 2-3 second intervals between pops, about 3-4 minutes total cooking time.
- 6 Season and serve**

Pour the kettle corn immediately into a large bowl. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt while still warm and toss to coat evenly.
- 7** Let cool for 2-3 minutes until the sugar coating crisps up before serving.

Tips

Use a heavy-bottomed pot with a tight-fitting lid to ensure even heat distribution and prevent sugar from burning while allowing kernels to pop completely.

Test your oil temperature with 3-4 kernels before adding the full batch - when they pop enthusiastically, your oil is ready for perfect kettle corn.

Move quickly when adding sugar to the hot oil and kernels, stirring briefly to distribute before covering, as you won't have time to mix once serious popping begins.

Keep the pot in constant gentle motion once popping starts, shaking back and forth over the burner to prevent sugar from burning and ensure even caramelization.

Remove from heat as soon as popping slows to 2-3 second intervals between pops - overcooking leads to burnt sugar and bitter flavors.

Add fine sea salt while the kettle corn is still warm so it adheres properly to the slightly sticky caramelized coating.

Work in small batches for best results - overcrowding the pot leads to uneven cooking and increased risk of burning the sugar.

Let kettle corn cool completely before storing in airtight containers to maintain maximum crispiness and prevent condensation from making it soggy.