Candy Trees

Right now, making Candy trees is very popular. It is quite simple to make them and they serve as gorgeous centerpieces for your special events or occasions including:

- Wedding table centerpieces
- Wedding gifts
- Kids parties - use as a table decoration and remove at "going home" time
- Birthday gifts
- Easter gifts
- Family party table decorations
- Christmas gifts and table decorations
- Halloween "trick or treat" party decorations
- etc

The most important components of a candy tree include large quantities of candy and a Styrofoam ball on a stick which the candy is attached to.

Note: All candy arrangements are time consuming projects and this includes candy trees. Ensure you have sufficient time (a few hours) for creating your candy tree.

I also have a few words of caution to add before continuing...

- The candy tree project will not be quick and it can be deceptive how long it takes – it is time consuming (usually two-three hours).

- Make sure your adhesives are the right kind. This is vital as if you make a sweet tree and they are the wrong type, your candies will not stay secured properly. There are lots of further instructions on this below.

- Before you go to purchase supplies, decide on how big you want the ball, stick and pot to be. Once again, you will find plenty of recommendations on this page.

- While this is not an inexpensive craft project, you can make some economies of scale by making multiple candy trees.

- Be careful when having Styrofoam sweets and balls around children. If you have any concern that they may consume a Styrofoam object, please do not let them hold or play with it.
**Styrofoam**

These crafts’ foundations are made of Styrofoam shapes. For those who are not sure what Styrofoam is, it is a brand name that refers to preformed polystyrene shapes and they are commonly used to make many different types of crafts.

You will use **ball** shaped Styrofoam pieces the most when creating sweet trees. You may also use cones, wreaths, stars and other shapes though. Don’t be afraid to explore new shapes – they may spark your creativity!

Going back to ball shapes, which are the ones most typically used for sweet trees, your **Styrofoam ball**’s size will depend on a few factors including but not limited to:

- The size of the pot you use.
- Money. It is more expensive to cover larger balls.
- The number of decorations or candies you plan to add to it.
- The reason for making the tree. If it is a gift, one large one may be suitable. However, for wedding tables, you will probably need many little trees.

5 or 6 inch wide balls are the most popular size used. The balls are measured based on their diameter, which is how wide across the cut surface when chopped down the middle.

First decide how wide you want your tree to be once complete and then subtract the size of the sweets that will surround the ball to get the size you need it to be. Remember that you will need more candies and decorations for larger balls.

**Buying the Right Sizes**

The website [http://www.craftybugs.co.uk/](http://www.craftybugs.co.uk/) provides helpful guidelines on what to do when buying the different pieces needed to make a candy tree.

- **3 5/32 inch** ball - use a 15/32 inch wide stick and a 2 53/64 inch tall tin pail
- **3 15/16 inch** ball - use a 35/64 inch - 5/8 inch wide stick and a 2 53/64 inch to 3 55/64 inch tall tin pail
- **4 23/32 inch** ball - use a 19/32 inch - 25/32 inch wide stick and either a 3 55/64 inch or 4 51/64 inch tall tin pail
- **5 29/32 inch** ball - use a 45/64 inch - 55/64 inch wide stick and a 4 51/64 inch tall tin pail
**Decorating Styrofoam**

Many of the candy trees that you can purchase have plain **Styrofoam balls** under the candies because it is cheaper to make them like this.

You can choose to decorate a Styrofoam ball before attaching sweets to it if you would like.

You can paint it. The best for Styrofoam painting are non-metallic acrylic paints.

Alternatively, you can cover your candy tree using cellophane or **tissue paper** by tying it around the neck where it meets the stick or using glue to secure it in place. This makes it look like a lollypop in its wrapper before adding the candies, meaning it is more visually appealing as the sweets are removed.

**Sticks**

When making candy trees, you can use wooden dowels or balsa wood sticks.

When deciding on how long of a stick you need, remember to account for the fact that the stick must go about one third of the way into your Styrofoam shape and still reach the bottom of your container.

Also, consider how wide of a stick you will need. With Styrofoam, dimensions are taken across the stick as opposed to around it to get the width. This means it is the width of the cut surface if you were to cut it in half.

Ensure that your stick is strong enough to support the weight of your embellishments and sweets. Also, your stick should be proportionate in size to the container being used.

**Container**

For this project, you can use any container you would like. Flower and Terra Cotta pots and tin pails are excellent choices for making candy trees. You can find them in a wide assortment of different colors, designs and sizes that suit all occasions or themes.

You may also choose to use your container as is or decorate it for the purposes of the project. Different types of embellishments can be added including jewels, ribbons, cut-outs and much more.

If you decide to use **Plaster of Paris**, using a tin pail as your container is a good idea because it can withstand the heat generated by Plaster of Paris. If you do not use Plaster of Paris to set your stick, you can then use painted paper mache pots, wooden or glass containers and other options as well.

**Attaching the Stick to the Ball**

You need to attach the ball to the stick. The stick should be set inside of the ball to about half way up its diameter (or more). Use hot glue, applied to the hole in the foam ball, to secure the ball and stick together tightly. Hold the two pieces in place together firmly for a few seconds until the glue cools to ensure they are securely joined.

In the event that you have difficulty getting the ball on to the stick, you may cut a small hole in your Styrofoam ball using a knife. Your hole should not be wider than the stick, ensuring a tight fit so that the stick does not wobble.

Make sure you don’t begin adding sweets just yet. Now, before setting the stick into the container, is a good time to wrap the ball in tissue paper or cellophane or paint it if you have chosen to do so.

You also need to decorate the stick.
The easiest way to decorate the stick is by wrapping it in green, white or brown floral tape and tying ribbon around it.

You can also paint the stick with acrylic paint or wrap it entirely in ribbon.

Follow your vision for how you want your centerpiece to look and use that as your guide.

**Setting the Stick into the container**

Now you need to set the stick into the container.

Be cautious if you use Plaster of Paris at it is quite liquid right after being made and dries fairly quickly. Ensure that the stick is perfectly straight when setting because you can’t move it after it dries in place.

Make sure you make the correct amount of **Plaster of Paris** necessary to hold it upright. For example, for a 3 $\frac{15}{16}$ inch tall tin, you will need about 1.1 lb. of dry Plaster of Paris.

**The Candies**

Only use wrapped candies for your sweet trees because they have many advantages:

- They are more hygienic both while making the tree and when on display.
- The wraps look decorative on the tree.
- Candies with wrappers are easier to secure to the tree.
- Wrapped sweets come in a very wide variety. How much candy will you need? Here are some points:
  - You need a lot of candies to make a medium sized sweet tree (you will need to use candy to cover the Styrofoam ball completely)
  - It is expensive to cover a tree in premium candy such as Ferrero Rocher. Instead, use a smaller Styrofoam ball or alternate between candy pieces and decorations such as cello pieces or silk flowers to reduce the quantity of candy needed.
  - Lollipops are excellent because of their stick. They are easy to attach and great to use in a retro sweet tree for your father or grandfather.
  - Werthers Originals have gorgeous foil wrappers which look amazing on a candy tree.
  - Foil wrapped hearts.

**Attaching Sweets to Sweet Trees**

1) Use a hot glue gun, being very careful that you do not melt your candy pieces. A low temperature glue gun is best.

2) Sticky foam pads. Use the largest ones that you can with the size of the candies and decorations you use as this ensures that they don’t fall off or budge.

3) You can attach candies with dressmaker’s pins if the tree is for an adult as opposed to a child.

**Embellishments**

Now you can really get creative using various craft supplies. Some examples are:
- Tinsel pipe cleaners wound around a pencil to make coils and then pushed into the Styrofoam.
- Curling ribbon
- Bells, they look and sound great, especially for wedding or Christmas trees
- Fabric ribbons, used loose or made into bows.
- Feathers - use only on wrapped sweets.
- Gems and jewels, especially on the stick.
- Fabric petals and ribbon flowers.
- Raffia, both loose and tied into bows.
- Fluffy pom poms are great, particularly if the sweet tree is for a kid.
- Tissue paper squares

**Gift Wrapped**

The best way you can wrap up your candy tree is with **cellophane rolls**, tape and matching colored **curling ribbon**! You may choose to wrap the entire tree or only cover the top of it. If you are going to add something onto or into the base of your tree, fully wrapping it is a good idea.

**Here are some candy tree examples. All rights belong to the corresponding sites. I hope these centerpieces will inspire you to create your own candy trees.**

[http://www.candy-tree.co.uk/](http://www.candy-tree.co.uk/)
http://www.the-sweetie-cart.co.uk/
http://www.123bounce.ie/sweet-trees/
Mini Holiday Chocolate Bar Tree
http://kellyxenos.typepad.com/thedailyx/2013/04/candy-trees.html (FREE Tutorial)
Beautiful Candy Trees with crepe paper flowers (use thick premium crepe paper for making candy flowers)
http://panbuket.v-teme.com/konfetnye_derevya (with crepe paper flowers)