

Meringue science

Why are meringues foamy and light? Find out here.



1. Cut a piece of baking parchment to fit inside a baking tray. Heat the oven to 110°C (225°F, gas mark ¼).

You won't need the yolk.



3. Hold a small cup over the yolk and tip the saucer so that the egg white dribbles into the bowl.



If the yolk breaks up, you will need to start again with a new egg.

2. Crack an egg on the edge of a bowl. Gently pull the shell apart and tip the white and yolk onto a saucer.

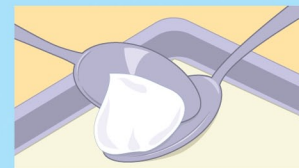
Use an electric whisk if you can; it's quicker!



4. Beat the egg white. After about 15 minutes, it forms a thick foam and the whisk makes peaks when you lift it.



5. Add 50g (2oz) of caster sugar, a teaspoonful at a time. Whisk the mixture after adding each spoonful.



6. Take a heaped teaspoon of the mixture and slide it onto the baking parchment using another teaspoon.



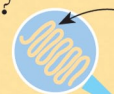
7. Do the same again, leaving gaps between each spoonful. Put the tray in the oven to bake for 45 minutes.



8. Turn off the oven and leave the meringues in for 15 more minutes. Then take them out and leave them to cool.

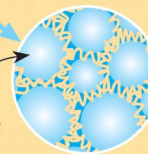
What's going on?

Egg white contains chains called albumin. Whisking whips air bubbles into the egg. The albumin traps the bubbles, making a foam. When you bake it, the foam hardens into meringues.



Before whisking, the albumin chains are quite tightly curled up.

Air bubble



After whisking, the chains uncurl and form a net that traps the air bubbles.

