

What's That Sweetener? (a cheat sheet to natural and unnatural sweeteners)

Sweetener	Looks like	Also known as	How to use	Notes
<b>White sugar:</b> from sugar cane or sugar beets; all the molasses content (with its minerals) is stripped away and it's generally bleached. No nutrient value.	You know white sugar, right?	Beet sugar, cane sugar, granulated sugar	Sugar sweetens anything and everything with ease, but...	...it is destructive to the human system and addictive in many ways. More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/UquVCf">http://bit.ly/UquVCf</a>
<b>Evaporated cane juice:</b> slightly less refined cane sugar; a small step up from white sugar; still very little to no nutritional value	Just a shade darker than white sugar, often slightly larger grained but not necessarily	Organic sugar, evaporated cane sugar, sometimes confused with Turbinado	Subs 1:1 with white sugar and doesn't change the flavor much if at all; may make white cakes or cookies just slightly darker off-white color	A good choice if organic, non-GMO or fair trade sugar is important to you. It's a large step up in price for a small step in nutrition.
<b>Sucanat (SUGar CAnE NATural):</b> whole cane sugar with about 13% molasses content (none is removed). More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/ofF3IQ">http://bit.ly/ofF3IQ</a>	Medium caramel brown in color, a bit like brown sugar but coarser and larger grained.	Rapadura, Panela, Jaggery, unrefined whole cane sugar, dehydrated cane sugar (juice)	As a dry sweetener, sucanat can sub 1:1 in any recipe that calls for white sugar. You can also whiz it in a blender to make an unrefined powdered sugar. It will caramelize in a cooked sauce.	Will change the flavor and color compared to white sugar; imparts a deeper molasses tone to recipes. In recipes heavy on the chocolate, pumpkin, spices, or cinnamon, sucanat is hardly noticeable.
<b>Coconut sugar:</b> dehydrated or evaporated nectar from palm tree flowers; lower glycemic index than sugar/honey; some mineral content. More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/Uqw7pf">http://bit.ly/Uqw7pf</a>	Medium brown in color, generally large granules. Looks almost exactly like sucanat to me.	Palm sugar, coconut palm sugar, coconut crystals, crystalized coconut sap, jaggery, aren sugar. <b>Coconut nectar</b> is the same thing in liquid form.	Use 1:1 in place of white sugar in recipes; will have a bit richer flavor and of course, color. Pairs especially well with cinnamon spiced baked goods. Does not crystalize/caramelize, so may change texture of cookies	Supposedly sustainable, but expensive. Some say it competes with availability of other coconut products.

			and not work in certain recipes.	
<b>Honey:</b> flavor changes depending on what flowers the bees visited. Raw local honey may help seasonal allergies.	Sticky, viscous liquid; amber colored. Raw honey solidifies over time.		Sweeter than sugar, so you need less. Follow the directions on this page to substitute for white sugar.	Has more health benefits than white sugar, although the glycemic index is fairly high. More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/iXc9sM">http://bit.ly/iXc9sM</a>
<b>Maple syrup:</b> boiled down sap of sugar maple trees. 40 gallons sap = 1 gallon syrup.	Thick, dark brown liquid, although thinner than honey.	Grade A vs. Grade B describes how concentrated the flavors (and also minerals) are. A is sweeter, B has more minerals.	Substitute any time a liquid sweetener is used, or sub for white sugar but cut down on the liquid.	Has the best mineral profile of the sweeteners and better for diabetics than honey. More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/o9cE5k">http://bit.ly/o9cE5k</a>
<b>Molasses:</b> from sugar cane; taken out to make white sugar.	Veru thick, very dark brown liquid.	Blackstrap molasses is darker and has lots of iron.	Molasses has a lot of flavor, but it's nice as part of the sweetener in anything with pumpkin, spice, or even used lightly in red meat dishes or tomato sauces.	High in iron; generally seen as a good sweetener.
<b>Sorghum syrup:</b> from “sweet sorghum” plant; the juice from the stalk is boiled down to concentrate the sweetness. More here: <a href="http://bit.ly/12qQAxr">http://bit.ly/12qQAxr</a>	Very thick, dark brown, sticky liquid. Hearty, deep flavor.		Great over cornbread or pancakes, use in baking in place of any liquid sweetener. Ideal for chocolate cakes or brownies (use ½ as much as white sugar called for), as well as savory dishes that need a little sweet.	Quite high in calcium, magnesium, potassium, zinc, and almost as much iron as blackstrap molasses. Used to be one of the main sweeteners in the U.S., especially in the South.
<b>Brown rice syrup:</b> a grain sweetener made similarly as sorghum; any grain can be malted into sweet, maltose-rich syrup. More	Thick, sticky brown liquid.		Use as any liquid sweetener.	

<p>here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/12rqOJz">http://bit.ly/12rqOJz</a></p>				
<p><b>Stevia:</b> a green plant whose leaves are 30-50x as sweet as table sugar. Zero calories, but not an artificial sweetener. Used for centuries in other countries. More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/12rtPt6">http://bit.ly/12rtPt6</a></p>	<p>Can be a green powder, which is just the dried leaf like any herb, or a white powder, for which the sweetest part is extracted and is 300x as sweet as sugar. Also a brown or clear liquid extract, also 300x as sweet.</p>	<p>Sold under trade names such as “Truvia” and “Purevia,” neither of which is pure stevia – both are mainly corn sugars and should be avoided. Any “baking blend” that subs 1:1 for sugar is bulked up with something, often erythritol or dextrose.</p>	<p>Use the green powder to sweeten tea or hot liquids; steep with the tea leaves. Use the white powder or liquid (3-4 drops) to sweeten beverages, yogurt, or anything that doesn't need the bulk of sugar. Difficult to use in baking. Less than a teaspoon is equal to a cup of sugar. More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/12ruN8Q">http://bit.ly/12ruN8Q</a></p>	<p>Extracts can be made with chemicals or not; I recommend Sweetleaf or NuNaturals brands as less processed. The brown liquid is less sweet but less refined than the clear, which is less refined than the white powder.</p>
<p><b>High fructose corn syrup:</b> Made from corn in a multi-step, 40-hour process that one could not replicate in the home kitchen. More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/16EYG0D">http://bit.ly/16EYG0D</a></p>	<p>Not often seen sold alone for home use; typically an ingredient in (just about every) processed food.</p>	<p>Because of good marketing by those who stand to profit from it, you'll see “corn sugar” on some ingredients lists. “Corn syrup” is similar to HFCS but with slightly less processing. Still a very refined sugar.</p>		<p>55% fructose (the bad sugar) and 45% glucose (the potentially helpful sugar). Linked to liver damage, cancer, diabetes, obesity, etc. Almost always genetically modified and known as a marker of processed (unhealthy) foods. May or may not be any worse than white sugar, but still to be avoided.</p>
<p><b>Agave nectar:</b> Made by boiling down the juice of the agave plant, a relative of the yucca. Relatively “new” in the world</p>	<p>Somewhat thick syrup, slightly less so than honey, light brown or clear.</p>	<p>Agave syrup</p>	<p>Can use in place of any liquid sweetener; I choose to simply avoid it.</p>	<p>Not recommended because it's very high in fructose, up to 95% (compare to HFCS at 55%), generally highly processed, and a</p>

<p>of food. More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/QWrF3N">http://bit.ly/QWrF3N</a></p>				<p>relatively new food with little long-term data. If you can find truly raw agave, not heated over 116F, that may be a good sign.</p>
<p><b>Sugar alcohols: xylitol, erythritol, sorbitol:</b> all start with a sugar or starch, then are fermented, hydrolyzed or hydrogenated into a sugar alcohol, which is not alcohol but not sugar.  More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/12rwxY">http://bit.ly/12rwxY</a></p>	<p>Usually a white powder for home use; often seen in ingredients list on sugar-free chocolates and as fillers in other “healthy” sweeteners like stevia blends.</p>	<p>sorbitol  xylitol  erythritol  mannitol  lactitol  isomalt  maltitol  hydrogenated starch hydrolysates (HSH) – a family of sweeteners including hydrogenated glucose syrup, maltitol or sorbitol syrup</p>	<p>Use typically 1:1 for white sugar, although certain sugar alcohols are less sweet than sugar while others are about equal.</p>	<p>Not quite calorie free, although often listed as “0 calories” because of a labeling loophole. In reality, they have 1/2-1/20 the calories of white sugar. They aren't absorbed by the gut and therefore have fewer calories and glycemic load. Can cause gas, bloating, and diarrhea, plus painful cramping in many individuals with just a small amount.</p>
<p><b>Artificial sweeteners:</b>  Created by scientists in the last few decades; Nutrasweet, for example, was discovered when a researcher accidentally licked his fingers while researching an ulcer medication.</p>	<p>Typically a white powder, sometimes bulked up to equal 1:1 mass with white sugar</p>	<p>Nutrasweet (aspartame), Splenda (sucralose), acesulfame potassium,</p>	<p>Don't bother using them; they're poison.</p>	<p>Various artificial sweeteners have been linked to cancer, digestive disorders, even obesity (because eating sweets without calories confuses our bodies and tells us to eat MORE).  More here:  <a href="http://bit.ly/yxNe5r">http://bit.ly/yxNe5r</a></p>