VANILLAGOODS BAKING ACADEMY · CHOCOLATE & CONFECTIONS

Course workbook

Chocolate Essentials

Tempering, ganache, caramel

Intermediate · 5 video lessons · 43 minutes of video · Notes, quizzes and a practice log



By the end you'll be able to

- Temper chocolate by seeding
- Make a smooth ganache
- Cook caramel to the right stage

Inside

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Lesson videos by Sugar Geek Show, The Stay At Home Chef, Nino's Home, Preppy Kitchen and CupcakeJemma, watched on YouTube from the course page.

This workbook belongs to _____

START HERE

How to use this workbook

This workbook goes with the free video course **Chocolate Essentials** on vanillagoods.com. Watch each lesson there, then use these pages to keep what you learned and to track what you have practised.

1

Watch

Open the lesson page and watch the creator's video. Jot quick notes on the lined space as you go.

2

Read and tick

Read the VanillaGoods notes, then tick each key point once you can explain it in your own words.

3

Check and practise

Answer the three questions, compare with the answer key on page 13, then log your bake.

Your lesson plan

	LESSON	VIDEO	WATCHED	QUIZ	PRACTISED
1	**Tempering chocolate** Video by Sugar Geek Show	12 min	☐	☐	☐
2	**Ganache ratios** Video by The Stay At Home Chef	9 min	☐	☐	☐
3	**Rolling truffles** Video by Nino's Home	5 min	☐	☐	☐
4	**Caramel sauce** Video by Preppy Kitchen	7 min	☐	☐	☐
5	**Vanilla fudge** Video by CupcakeJemma	10 min	☐	☐	☐

Tools you'll see

Instant-read thermometer · Double boiler · Silicone candy molds · Silicone spatula · Saucepan · Balloon whisk · Mixing bowls · Cookie scoop · Dutch-process cocoa · Parchment paper · Candy and deep-fry thermometer · Pastry brush · 8×8 baking dish

Any brand works. The lessons show what each tool is for.

Keep track online too

On each lesson page, "Mark complete" saves your progress in your browser, with no account. Finish every lesson and the course page lets you print a free certificate of completion.

Tempering chocolate

Video by **Sugar Geek Show**: *"How to Temper Chocolate Three Easy Ways!"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/chocolate-essentials-1-tempering-chocolate

Temper chocolate by seeding or in the microwave so it sets glossy with a clean snap, and test it before you use it.

Key points

- [ ] Tempering creates stable cocoa butter crystals
- [ ] Dark chocolate should not go above 90°F once tempered
- [ ] Always test on parchment before dipping

Why temper

Cocoa butter can set into several crystal forms. Tempering gives you the stable form that makes chocolate shiny, snappy and slow to melt in your hand. Untempered chocolate sets dull, streaky and soft.

The seeding method

- Chop chocolate; melt about two-thirds of it gently
- Stir in the remaining third, already tempered, to cool it down
- Stir until it reaches working temperature: no higher than about 90°F (32°C) for dark, 84°F (30°C) for milk, 88°F (31°C) for white
- Test a smear on parchment: it should set glossy within about 5 minutes at cool room temperature

Watch for

Use real chocolate with cocoa butter, not candy melts. Keep every drop of water away; even a little makes chocolate seize.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Instant-read thermometer · Double boiler · Silicone candy molds · Silicone spatula

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 Why temper chocolate at all?

- (A) So it melts faster
- (B) So it sets glossy with a clean snap instead of dull and soft
- (C) So it tastes sweeter

2 Tempered dark chocolate should stay below about...

- (A) 110°F
- (B) 130°F
- (C) 90°F

3 What does a drop of water do to melted chocolate?

- (A) Makes it seize
- (B) Makes it shinier
- (C) Thins it out

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Ganache ratios

Video by **The Stay At Home Chef**: *"Ultimate Guide to Chocolate Ganache"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/chocolate-essentials-2-ganache-ratios

Use simple chocolate-to-cream ratios to make ganache for drizzling, whipping, filling or truffles, and fix it when it splits.

Key points

- [ ] Equal parts by weight makes a pourable ganache
- [ ] More chocolate makes it firmer
- [ ] Milk and white chocolate need more chocolate than dark

Ratios by weight (chocolate to cream)

- 1:1 for drizzles, glazes and soft fillings
- 1:1 chilled and whipped for a light, frosting-like ganache
- 2:1 for firm ganache, truffles and tart fillings
- Milk and white chocolate are softer, so use roughly 2:1 to 3:1 for similar results

Method

Chop the chocolate finely, pour just-simmering cream over it, wait 2–5 minutes, then stir from the center outward until glossy.

Troubleshooting

- Grainy or oily: whisk in a splash of warm cream, or blend briefly with an immersion blender
- Too thin: add more chopped chocolate or chill
- Too thick: warm gently and stir in a little cream

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Saucepan · Balloon whisk · Silicone spatula · Mixing bowls

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 Which ratio of chocolate to cream (by weight) makes a pourable glaze?

- (A) 2:1
- (B) 3:1
- (C) 1:1

2 Why do milk and white chocolate need more chocolate in the ratio?

- (A) They are softer, so they need more chocolate for the same firmness
- (B) They melt at a higher temperature
- (C) They contain less sugar

3 The ganache looks grainy and oily. What fixes it?

- (A) Chill it
- (B) Whisk in a splash of warm cream, or blend briefly with an immersion blender
- (C) Add more chocolate

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
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WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Rolling truffles

Video by **Nino's Home**: *"Condensed Milk Chocolate Truffles Easy Recipe [2 Ingredients]"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/chocolate-essentials-3-rolling-truffles

Make easy two-ingredient chocolate truffles with condensed milk and cocoa, plus tips for classic ganache truffles.

Key points

- [ ] Chill the mixture until firm enough to scoop
- [ ] Portion with a small scoop for even truffles
- [ ] Roll quickly with cool hands, then coat

This video's method

This recipe uses just two ingredients: sweetened condensed milk and cocoa powder, worked into a thick chocolate paste, chilled for about 2 hours and rolled in more cocoa. It's a quick, forgiving way to make chewy, fudgy truffles.

Rolling tips

- Use a small scoop or teaspoon so truffles are the same size
- Chill the portions 10 minutes before rolling
- Dust your hands with cocoa, or wear gloves, and roll quickly
- Coat in cocoa, chopped nuts, coconut or sprinkles

Classic ganache truffles

For a richer truffle, make a firm 2:1 ganache, add a little vanilla or liqueur, chill until scoopable and roll the same way. Store chilled; serve at room temperature.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Cookie scoop · Dutch-process cocoa · Silicone candy molds · Parchment paper

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 The two-ingredient truffles in this lesson are made from...

- (A) Sweetened condensed milk and cocoa powder
- (B) Cream and dark chocolate
- (C) Butter and sugar

2 How do you get truffles that are all the same size?

- (A) Weigh each one on a scale
- (B) Use a small scoop or teaspoon
- (C) Guess by eye

3 For classic ganache truffles you need a ganache ratio of about...

- (A) 1:1
- (B) 1:2
- (C) 2:1

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Caramel sauce

Video by **Preppy Kitchen**: *"Caramel Recipe"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/chocolate-essentials-4-caramel-sauce

Cook sugar to a deep amber and turn it into a silky caramel sauce for cakes, ice cream and coffee.

Key points

- [ ] Color equals flavor; aim for deep amber
- [ ] Warm cream before adding it
- [ ] Hot sugar is dangerous, so work carefully

Step by step

- Cook sugar (with a little water for the wet method) over medium heat
- Swirl instead of stirring, and brush down the sides with a wet pastry brush to prevent crystals
- Cook to a deep amber, about 340–350°F
- Off the heat, carefully whisk in warm cream; it will bubble up hard
- Stir in butter, salt and vanilla

Watch for

- Grainy caramel: stray crystals; next time keep the pan sides clean
- Bitter caramel: cooked too dark
- Too thick when cold: warm it gently or add a spoonful of cream

VanillaGoods tip

Add vanilla at the end, off the heat. High heat drives off its aroma.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Saucepan · Candy and deep-fry thermometer · Balloon whisk · Pastry brush

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 How do you keep sugar from crystallizing while it cooks?

- (A) Stir constantly
- (B) Swirl the pan and brush the sides with a wet pastry brush
- (C) Cook it on high heat

2 What color and temperature are you cooking the sugar to?

- (A) Pale gold, about 300°F
- (B) Dark brown, about 380°F
- (C) Deep amber, about 340 to 350°F

3 When does the vanilla go in?

- (A) At the end, off the heat
- (B) With the sugar at the start
- (C) Halfway through cooking

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Vanilla fudge

Video by **CupcakeJemma**: *"Super-simple creamy Vanilla Fudge Recipe | Cupcake Jemma"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/chocolate-essentials-5-vanilla-fudge

Make creamy, chewy vanilla fudge with condensed milk and brown sugar, and learn the soft-ball stage that makes it set.

Key points

- [ ] Cook to the soft-ball stage
- [ ] Beat as it cools for a smooth texture
- [ ] Add vanilla at the end

The key temperature

Fudge sets because it's cooked to the soft-ball stage, about 234–240°F (112–116°C). A clip-on candy thermometer makes this reliable. Undercooked fudge stays soft; overcooked fudge turns crumbly.

Step by step

- Dissolve the sugars in the milk, condensed milk and butter over low heat before boiling
- Boil, stirring often so it doesn't catch, to soft-ball stage
- Take it off the heat and beat until it thickens and starts to lose its shine
- Pour into a lined pan, let set, then cut into squares

VanillaGoods tip

Stir in vanilla after cooking. In fudge, the quality of the vanilla is obvious, so this is the place for pure extract or vanilla bean seeds.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Candy and deep-fry thermometer · Saucepan · Parchment paper · 8×8 baking dish

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What temperature is the soft-ball stage?

- (A) About 212°F
- (B) About 300°F
- (C) About 234 to 240°F

2 What goes wrong if fudge is cooked too long?

- (A) It turns crumbly
- (B) It stays soft
- (C) It will not take vanilla

3 Why beat the fudge as it cools?

- (A) To cool it faster
- (B) For a smooth texture: it thickens and starts to lose its shine
- (C) To add air so it rises

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

ANSWER KEY

Check your answers

One correct answer per question. If you missed one, the note explains why, and the lesson page has the full notes and the video.

1. Tempering chocolate

1 **B** Tempering gives the stable cocoa butter crystals that make chocolate shiny, snappy and slow to melt; untempered chocolate sets dull, streaky and soft.

2 **C** Working temperature is no higher than about 90°F for dark, 84°F for milk and 88°F for white chocolate.

3 **A** Even a little water makes chocolate seize, so keep bowls, spatulas and hands dry.

2. Ganache ratios

1 **C** Equal parts by weight gives a pourable ganache for drizzles, glazes and soft fillings; 2:1 makes it firm enough for truffles.

2 **A** Milk and white chocolate are softer than dark, so use roughly 2:1 to 3:1 for similar results.

3 **B** A split ganache comes back together with a splash of warm cream or a quick blend.

3. Rolling truffles

1 **A** Sweetened condensed milk and cocoa powder are worked into a thick paste, chilled about 2 hours and rolled in more cocoa.

2 **B** A small scoop or teaspoon gives even portions; chill them 10 minutes before rolling.

3 **C** A firm 2:1 ganache, chilled until scoopable, rolls into classic truffles; store them chilled and serve at room temperature.

4. Caramel sauce

1 **B** Swirl instead of stirring and brush stray crystals off the pan sides with a wet brush; stray crystals make caramel grainy.

2 **C** Color equals flavor: cook to a deep amber, about 340 to 350°F; darker turns bitter.

3 **A** Add vanilla at the end, off the heat; high heat drives off its aroma.

5. Vanilla fudge

1 **C** Fudge sets because it is cooked to the soft-ball stage, about 234 to 240°F; a clip-on thermometer makes it reliable.

2 **A** Undercooked fudge stays soft; overcooked fudge turns crumbly.

3 **B** Beating as it cools gives a smooth, creamy texture; stop when it thickens and starts to lose its shine, then pour it into the pan.

WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED

Three things to do next

1

Mark each lesson complete

The "Mark complete" button on every lesson page saves your progress in your browser. No account, nothing to sign up for.

2

Print your certificate

Once all 5 lessons are marked complete, the course page prints a free certificate of completion with your name on it. It records what you finished; it is not an accredited qualification.

3

Bake it

Practice with VanillaGoods recipes that use what this course teaches.

vanillagoods.com/pages/recipes?q=chocolate

NEXT ON THE LEARNING PATH

Pastry & Croissant School

Advanced · Laminated dough, shaping, proofing

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-course/croissant-school

Free guide for this course: “Sugar stages chart”, Temperatures from thread to hard crack, and what each stage makes. Get it from the course page.

Baking with real vanilla? VanillaGoods keeps Madagascar, Uganda and Tahiti vanilla in stock, along with coffee and tea, at vanillagoods.com.

✧ Key points from every lesson

1. Tempering chocolate

- Tempering creates stable cocoa butter crystals
- Dark chocolate should not go above 90°F once tempered
- Always test on parchment before dipping

2. Ganache ratios

- Equal parts by weight makes a pourable ganache
- More chocolate makes it firmer
- Milk and white chocolate need more chocolate than dark

3. Rolling truffles

- Chill the mixture until firm enough to scoop
- Portion with a small scoop for even truffles
- Roll quickly with cool hands, then coat

4. Caramel sauce

- Color equals flavor; aim for deep amber
- Warm cream before adding it
- Hot sugar is dangerous, so work carefully

5. Vanilla fudge

- Cook to the soft-ball stage
- Beat as it cools for a smooth texture
- Add vanilla at the end

The lesson videos are by independent creators (Sugar Geek Show, The Stay At Home Chef, Nino's Home, Preppy Kitchen and CupcakeJemma) and play in YouTube's own player on the lesson pages; this workbook links to them and copies nothing. Notes, key points, questions and this workbook are written by VanillaGoods for home bakers.

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