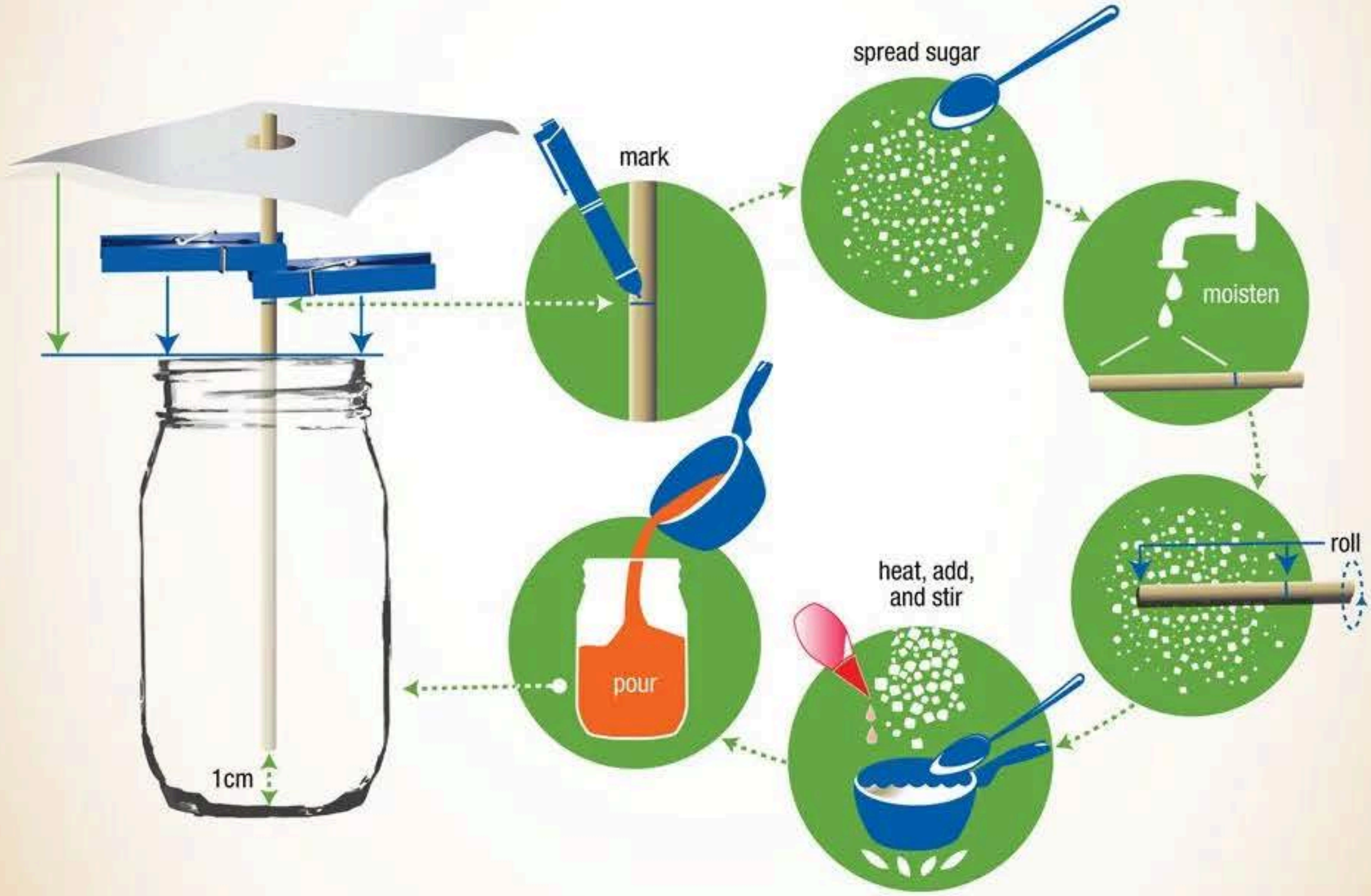


Rock Candy for Rookies: A Beginner's Guide to the Sweet Stuff

You knew you could grow flowers and trees, but did you know that you can grow crystals too? Follow the steps below to grow your very own sucrose crystals, also known as rock candy:



1. Place 2 clothespins around a wooden skewer and rest them on the mouth of the glass container. Adjust the end of the skewer to within 1 cm of the container's bottom. Mark the location of the clothespins with a pen.
2. Pour 1 tsp of sugar onto a piece of wax paper and spread it around to make an even layer.
3. Take the skewer out of the container and moisten the area below the mark with water.
4. Roll the wet portion of the skewer around in the sugar to form an even coating.
5. Heat 2 cups of water in a pot on the stove and gradually pour in 4 cups of sugar, heating and stirring until the sugar dissolves into a thick syrup.
6. If using food coloring: add 2-3 drops.
   If using flavoring: add 1 tsp extract or ½ tsp oil.
   Stir and pour the syrupy mixture into your glass container.
7. Reattach the 2 clothespins to the skewer right above the pen mark.
8. Lower the skewer into the sugar solution with the clothespins resting on top of the container.
9. Cut a hole in a paper towel, and place the paper towel over the jar to keep dust particles from entering.
10. Check your container after 5-7 days. By now, large sugar crystals should have formed.
11. Take the rock candy out of the container, and place it on a piece of wax paper to observe.
12. Remove the clothespins, and enjoy!



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