

What's really in sugary drinks?

Ingredient lists: Decoded

Common sugary drink ingredients... more than just sugar.

Many sugary drinks contain artificial colors and sweeteners, artificial flavors, and preservatives in addition to sugar. This sheet can help you navigate the ingredient lists on sugary drinks.

The many names of added sugar

- sugar
- high fructose corn syrup
- fruit juice concentrates
- corn syrup
- fructose
- sucrose
- glucose
- crystalline fructose
- cane sugar

Common artificial colors

- blue 1
- caramel color
- red 40
- yellow 5 & 6

Common artificial sweeteners

- acesulfame potassium
- aspartame
- sucralose
- Stevia/rebiana*

Why avoid artificial colors and sweeteners? Most food and drinks that contain these ingredients are highly processed and generally not the healthiest choice. Although artificial sweeteners are calorie-free, research does not show that they are effective for weight loss or that they prevent weight gain.

Keep in mind

Diet and light drinks aren't the only ones with artificial sweeteners. These sugary drinks also contain them:

Capri Sun Roarin' Waters

Kool-Aid Singles

Hawaiian Punch

Sunny D



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Kool-Aid Jammers Tropical Punch

Ingredients: Water, high fructose corn syrup, apple juice from concentrate, contains less than 2% of ascorbic acid (vitamin C), natural and artificial flavors, citric acid, calcium disodium EDTA (preserves freshness), blue 1.



Ingredient	Translation
Water	
High fructose corn syrup	Sugar
Apple juice from concentrate	
Ascorbic acid	Vitamin C
Natural and artificial flavors	
Citric acid	Natural preservative
Calcium disodium EDTA	Preservative
Blue 1	Artificial color

Simplified ingredient list: Water and sugar with 10% apple juice, added vitamin c, a preservative, and an artificial color.

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Lipton Brisk Raspberry Iced Tea

Ingredients: Water, high fructose corn syrup, citric acid, natural flavor, instant tea, phosphoric acid, sodium hexametaphosphate (to protect flavor), potassium sorbate and potassium benzoate (preserves freshness), caramel color, calcium disodium EDTA (to protect flavor), red 40.



Ingredient	Translation
Water	
High fructose corn syrup	Sugar
Citric acid	Natural preservative
Natural flavor	
Instant tea	
Phosphoric acid	Adds acidic taste
Sodium hexametaphosphate	Preservative
Potassium sorbate	Preservative
Potassium benzoate	Preservative
Caramel color	Artificial color
Calcium disodium EDTA	Preservative
Red 40	Artificial color

Simplified ingredient list: Water and sugar with four preservatives and two artificial colors.

What's really in this sugary drink?

Ingredient lists: Decoded

Hawaiian Punch Fruit Juicy Red

Ingredients: Water, high fructose corn syrup and 2% or less of each of the following: concentrated juices (apple, pineapple, passionfruit, orange), fruit purees (apricot, papaya, guava), citric acid, natural and artificial flavors, pectin, acacia gum, ester gum, sodium hexametaphosphate, red 40, blue 1, caramel color, sodium benzoate and potassium sorbate (preservative), ascorbic acid (vitamin c), sucralose.



Simplified ingredient list: Water and sugar with small amounts of fruit juice and fruit puree, 2 emulsifiers, 3 preservatives, artificial sweetener, and 3 artificial colors.

Ingredient	Translation
Water	
High fructose corn syrup	Sugar
Concentrated juices	Sugar
Fruit purees	Sugar
Citric acid	Natural preservative
Natural and artificial flavors	
Pectin	Thickener/stabilizer
Acacia gum	Emulsifier/stabilizer
Ester gum	Emulsifier/stabilizer
Sodium hexametaphosphate	Preservative
Red 40	Artificial color
Blue 1	Artificial color
Caramel color	Artificial color
Sodium benzoate	Preservative
Potassium sorbate	Preservative
Ascorbic acid	Vitamin C
Sucralose	Artificial sweetener

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Sunny D Tangy Original

Ingredients: Water, corn syrup, and 2% or less of each of the following: Concentrated juices (orange, tangerine, apple, lime, grapefruit), citric acid, ascorbic acid (vitamin C), thiamin hydrochloride (vitamin B1), natural flavors, modified cornstarch, canola oil, sodium citrate, cellulose gum, sucralose, acesulfame potassium, neotame, sodium hexametaphosphate, potassium sorbate and sodium benzoate to protect flavor, yellow #5, yellow #6.



Simplified ingredient list:

Water and sugar with 5% juice, added vitamins, two stabilizers, four preservatives, three artificial sweeteners, and two artificial colors.

Ingredient	Translation
Water	
Corn syrup	Sugar
Concentrated juices	Sugar
Citric acid	Natural preservative
Ascorbic acid	Vitamin C
Thiamin hydrochloride	Vitamin B1
Natural flavors	
Modified cornstarch	Emulsifier/stabilizer
Canola Oil	
Sodium citrate	Preservative
Cellulose gum	Thickener/stabilizer
Sucralose	Artificial sweetener
Acesulfame potassium	Artificial sweetener
Neotame	Artificial sweetener
Sodium hexametaphosphate	Preservative
Potassium sorbate	Preservative
Sodium benzoate	Preservative
Yellow #5	Artificial color
Yellow #6	Artificial color