

# Tasty Corals

Age: 4+

The exoskeleton is a hard covering on the outside of an animal's skin (for example, a shell). Humans and animals have an endoskeleton, meaning that the skeleton is inside the body. Corals have exoskeletons that are made of calcium carbonate.

Algae can live in corals, and they have a mutualistic relationship with each other, meaning that they both benefit from each other's presence. The coral provides shelter for algae, while the algae helps remove waste from the coral and produce oxygen. Other types of coral may get their food by extending their tentacles and stinging their prey, like their jellyfish and anemone relatives.



This yummy craft builds an exoskeleton out of chocolate and adds candy to show the algae living in the corals. It's a great way to learn about coral biology and have a snack!

## Steps and materials

### Materials:

- Melted chocolate
- Sprinkles (or sugar, optional)
- Large Marshmallows
- Licorice ropes (or a similar candy such as pull-apart twizzlers, livewires or Haribo's Sour S'getti)
- Toothpicks

### Instructions:

1. With a toothpick, make around six holes on the top of the marshmallows
2. Place a small amount of melted chocolate on the plate and roll the marshmallow in the chocolate (except for the side with the holes). This is the exoskeleton of the coral. –
3. Pour some sprinkles on the marshmallows so they stick to the melted chocolate. This is the algae living in the corals.
4. With a toothpick or your fingers, push the licorice pieces into the holes at the top of the marshmallow. The licorice acts as the tentacles of the coral.
5. Eat and enjoy!

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