

Our State eats

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Buckeyes

Yield: 4 dozen.

- 2 cups creamy peanut butter (not all-natural)
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate morsels
- 2 tablespoons vegetable shortening

In a large bowl, beat the peanut butter, butter, and vanilla with an electric mixer at medium speed until smooth.

Add the powdered sugar, and beat on low speed until the mixture is well mixed. The mixture will be crumbly and look a little dry.

Form the mixture into 1-inch balls. Press a wooden pick into the top of each ball (to be used later as the handle for dipping), and chill the balls in the freezer until firm, about 30 minutes.

In a small glass bowl, microwave the chocolate and shortening at 50 percent reduced power in 30-second intervals until the morsels begin to soften and lose their shape, then stir until melted and smooth. Alternatively, heat the



chocolate and shortening in a small saucepan over low heat until the morsels begin to soften and lose their shape, then remove the pan from the heat and stir until melted and smooth.

Working with one at a time, hold a ball by the pick, and dip the lower three-fourths of it into the melted chocolate, leaving the brown tops exposed. **[Hint: If the pick starts to slip out, place a fork underneath the ball for stability while you dip.]** Let the excess chocolate drip back into the bowl. Place the coated ball on waxed paper or parchment paper to set. Remove the pick.

Cover the coated candies loosely with plastic wrap or nonstick aluminum foil and chill. Store refrigerated in an airtight container.

Hint: The peanut butter balls must be chilled and the chocolate must be warm for the coating to adhere properly. Work in batches, removing only about a dozen balls from the freezer at a time. Gently reheat the chocolate when it starts to cool and solidify. **Another hint:** You can replace the semisweet chocolate and shortening with 2 (16-ounce) packages of candy coating.

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