

## Bourbon Caramel Popcorn

<http://userealbutter.com/2013/12/05/bourbon-caramel-popcorn-recipe/>  
*slightly modified from [this recipe](#)*

3/4 cup popcorn kernels  
3 cups sugar  
3 tbsps butter, unsalted  
1 tbsp vanilla extract  
1 1/2 tsps kosher salt  
1/4 cup bourbon  
1 1/2 tsp baking soda

**Pop the popcorn:** You can air pop the popcorn if you like, but my favorite way to do it comes from [Simply Recipes](#). Pour 3 tablespoons of canola or other high smoke point oil into a large saucepan with a lid (large, because I'm popping 3/4 cup). Drop four kernels of corn into the pan. Cover and set over high heat. After all of the kernels pop (you'll hear them – be sure to count that they all pop lest you get one in the eye – ouch!) turn off the heat. Pour in all of the kernels and cover with lid. Wait 30 seconds. Turn the heat back on to high. The popcorn should be done when you no longer hear popping. Just to be safe, when you empty the popcorn into your bowl(s), pour it away from you in case an unpopped kernel decides to pop. I put my popcorn in two large bowls.

**Make the caramel:** Have a baking sheet lined with a silpat or foil at the ready. [Take care not to touch the caramel as it get very hot and can burn you pretty badly.] Place the sugar, butter, vanilla, kosher salt, and bourbon in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the sugar melts. After a few minutes (took me several minutes) the caramel will begin to turn a caramel color. It turns dark in a matter of seconds, so I suggest removing the pan from the heat immediately as it will continue to darken. Quickly stir the baking soda into the caramel. It will balloon up, but just keep stirring so it doesn't bubble over.

**Make the caramel popcorn:** Once the caramel is well mixed, immediately pour it over the popcorn. If you have two bowls, pour half over one bowl and the other half over the other bowl. Stir the popcorn with the caramel quickly to ensure coating as much of the popcorn as possible, then spread it out onto the baking sheet to let it cool. When the popcorn is completely cooled, break the pieces up. Makes about 24 cups of bourbon caramel popcorn.