

Skittles-Taste the Rainbow

Skittles were originally made and marketed in the UK beginning in 1974. In 1979, however, they became an immediate sensation in North America as an import confection. In 1994, a New York advertising company created the now infamous “Taste the Rainbow” slogan. This slogan would go on to be one of the longest running ad campaigns in history.

“Taste the rainbow” seems like an ideal fit with the Pride community, but it wasn’t until 2016 that the two worlds meshed. That year during Pride month, Skittles sold packs of white coloured candies in grey, nondescript packages. After facing serious backlash for removing the iconic rainbow colours, Skittles responded with the following: “So this is kind of awkward, but we’re just gonna go ahead and address the rainbow-colored elephant in the room. You have the rainbow... we have the rainbow... and usually that’s just hunky-dory. But this Pride, only one rainbow deserves to be the centre of attention - yours. And we’re not going to be the ones to steal your rainbow thunder, no siree.”

Since then, Skittles sells colourless candies during Pride month, in a colourless package (except for the US which sells grey candies, not white). On current packages, the slogan simply reads, “Only one rainbow matters during PRIDE.”

If that wasn’t enough to make Skittles the Pride darling, then consider what the Mars Wrigley company does with sales during Pride month. Each year, the company aligns with a charity that supports LGBTQ+ people and resources. These have included GLAAD, the Trevor Project, the National Black Trans Advocacy Project, and the Switchboard Hotline (UK).

Sarah Ling, CMO of Mars Wrigley says, “Skittles giving up their rainbow means so much more than just removing the colors from our Skittles packs, and we’re excited to use our platform to do our part in driving visibility for the LGBTQ+ community.” Planning for the future, they remain committed to supporting and uplifting the LGBTQ+ community.

Taste the rainbow, indeed...well played Skittles. Well played :)