

# Spelling Love with Candy Hearts

## Ten new ways to convey those immortal words

by Holly Hartman  
& David Johnson

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For more than a century, the makers of NECCO Sweethearts Conversation Hearts have come up with some of the sweetest ways of saying “I love you.” Every Valentine’s Day the company presents new messages on the tiny colored hearts that have been a holiday tradition since the Civil War.



The new sayings for 2004 promote “sweet dreams and new beginnings.” They include “Start Now,” “New Love,” “Charm Me,” and “New You.” There’s also one that reflects the newest way of getting your messages of love across—instant messaging—“IM Me.”

### 2004 Candy Hearts

- 3 Wishes
- Ever After
- New You
- Magic
- Dream
- Charm Me
- Start Now
- New Love
- IM Me
- I ♥ You

Last year’s new sayings promoted literacy. They included “Let’s Read,” “Pen Pal,” “Write Me,” and “Love Letter.”

### Sweet Talk for the Times

Some favorites among the more than one hundred Sweetheart sayings have been in circulation since the hearts were first factory-made in 1902. These classics include “Kiss Me,” “Sweet Talk,” and “Be Mine.” Sometimes a motto is discontinued for a time and then makes a reappearance; others are gone for good. Sayings considered outdated by NECCO include the funky “Dig Me” and the cheerful “You Are Gay.”

NECCO says that creating mottoes can be tricky. The new sayings can't be "offensive, distasteful, or too wordy," according to Walter Marshall, retired NECCO vice president.

Sweethearts Colors and Flavors	
Pink	Cherry
Yellow	Banana
Orange	Orange
Green	Lemon
Purple	Grape
White	Wintergreen
Brown	Chocolate

Space is also an issue. Conversation hearts come in two sizes—the standard 1/2 inch and the larger 3/4 inch model. The small hearts generally can fit no more than two words with four letters each, while the large hearts may accommodate two words with six letters each. Fortunately, creative phrasing can help fit longer sentiments onto the tiny hearts, as in the case of "EZ 2 LOVE."

### Say It Again, Sweetheart

If you miss some of the old sayings, or would like to see some of your own, you can have them custom-made. The

catch is that you'll have to buy a full production run, or about 1.7 million candy hearts. But you'll have plenty of time to eat them—they should stay fresh for at least five years.

Production of Sweethearts for Valentine's Day has already begun. There's still a chance to submit your slogan ideas for the coming year, however. NECCO must produce about 100,000 pounds of the candy hearts every day in order to meet the Valentine demand, when about 8 billion hearts are sold in six weeks.

Conversation hearts were invented in the 1860s by the brother of NECCO's founder. These first hearts had printed paper notes tucked inside. The lengthy, old-fashioned sayings included such wistful thoughts as "Please send a lock of your hair by return mail."

### Candy Hearts Archive 2003 Candy Hearts

- WRITE ME
- CLASS ACT
- WHIZ KID
- WISE UP
- TEACH ME
- LOVE LETTER
- PEN PAL
- BOOK CLUB
- SCHOOL MATE
- LET'S READ