Prep Time	25 minutes
Cook Time	10 minutes
Chill/Set Time	30 minutes
Total Time	1 hour 5 minutes
Yield	12 apple rings (6 servings)
Difficulty	Easy
Intensity Level	Low–Moderate (light stovetop work, no baking)

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Ingredients

For the Apple Rings

- 3 large crisp apples (Honeycrisp, Fuji, or Granny Smith work best)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice (to prevent browning)
- 1 cup cold water

For the Caramel-Peanut Layer

- 1 cup soft caramels (or 1 cup granulated sugar + ¼ cup water for homemade caramel)
- 2 tbsp heavy cream
- ½ cup roasted peanuts, roughly chopped
- Pinch of sea salt

For the Chocolate Coating

- 1½ cups semi-sweet or milk chocolate chips

- 1 tsp coconut oil (or vegetable shortening) for a smooth melt

Optional Toppings

- Extra chopped peanuts
- Flaky sea salt
- Mini chocolate drizzle

Equipment

- Apple corer or small round biscuit cutter
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Small saucepan
- Heatproof bowl

- Silicone spatula
- Parchment-lined baking sheet
- Popsicle sticks (optional, for holding)

Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Apple Rings (10 minutes | Low intensity)

1. Wash and dry the apples. Core them, then slice each apple crosswise into ½-inch-thick rings. You should get about 4 rings per apple.
2. Using a small round cutter or the tip of a knife, remove the seed center from each ring to create a clean hole (it should look like a donut).
3. In a medium bowl, combine the cold water and lemon juice. Submerge the apple rings for 2–3 minutes to prevent browning, then pat thoroughly dry with paper towels. Dry apples are essential—moisture will make the caramel slide off.

Step 2: Make the Caramel-Peanut Layer (8 minutes | Moderate intensity—watch closely)

1. In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, combine the caramels and heavy cream.

Stir constantly with a silicone spatula until the caramels melt into a smooth, glossy sauce (about 4–5 minutes). *Intensity note: keep the heat low; caramel scorches quickly above medium.*

2. Remove from heat and stir in the chopped peanuts and a pinch of sea salt. Let the mixture cool for 3–4 minutes—it should be thick but still spreadable.

Step 3: Assemble the Rings (7 minutes | Low intensity)

1. Arrange the dried apple rings on the parchment-lined baking sheet.

2. Spoon about 1–2 teaspoons of the caramel-peanut mixture onto each ring, spreading it gently to the edges with the back of the spoon. Don’t overfill—a thin, even layer holds best.

3. If using popsicle sticks, press one into the caramel layer of each ring now.

4. Transfer the tray to the refrigerator and chill for 15 minutes to firm up the caramel.

Step 4: Melt the Chocolate (5 minutes | Low intensity)

1. In a heatproof bowl, combine the chocolate chips and coconut oil.

2. Melt in the microwave in 20-second bursts at 50% power, stirring between each burst, until smooth and glossy (about 1–1½ minutes total). Alternatively, set the bowl over a saucepan of barely simmering water (double boiler) over low heat, stirring until melted.

3. *Intensity note: do not let any water touch the chocolate, or it will seize and turn grainy.*

Step 5: Coat the Rings (10 minutes | Low intensity)

1. Remove the chilled rings from the refrigerator.

2. Holding each ring by its edges (or the popsicle stick), dip it halfway into the melted chocolate—or drizzle chocolate generously over the top with a spoon. Let excess drip back into the bowl.

3. Return to the parchment-lined tray. Immediately sprinkle with extra chopped peanuts and a pinch of flaky sea salt while the chocolate is still wet.

Step 6: Set and Serve (15 minutes | No active intensity)

1. Chill the coated rings in the refrigerator for at least 15–20 minutes, or until the chocolate is fully set.

2. Serve cold or at cool room temperature. Best enjoyed the same day; store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Tips for Success

- Choose firm apples. Soft varieties release juice and cause the coating to slip.
- Dry, dry, dry. Pat the rings completely dry after the lemon bath—this is the #1 trick for a sticking coating.
- Work in batches. If the kitchen is warm, coat 4–5 rings at a time so the caramel doesn't soften too much.
- Make it homemade. For a deeper flavor, cook 1 cup sugar with ¼ cup water over medium heat until amber (about 8–10 minutes), then carefully stir in 2 tbsp cream and the peanuts.

Nutrition Information (per serving — 2 apple rings)

Estimated values; actual numbers vary by apple size, caramel brand, and chocolate type.

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	~310 kcal
Total Fat	16 g
Saturated Fat	7 g
Cholesterol	8 mg
Sodium	95 mg
Total Carbohydrates	40 g
Dietary Fiber	4 g

Nutrient	Amount
Total Sugars	30 g
Protein	5 g
Vitamin C	~8% DV
Calcium	~6% DV
Iron	~6% DV