

Baker's Reference



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Common Weight / Volume Conversions

COMMON BAKING INGREDIENT WEIGHTS	
Ingredient	Weight – (ounces)
1 cup of All Purpose flour (dip and sweep method)	5 oz
1 cup of cake flour (dip and sweep method)	4.5 oz
1 cup of cake flour (spooned into the cup)	4 oz
1 cup of cake flour (sifted, then measured)	3.5 oz
1 cup of whole wheat flour (dip and sweep)	5 oz
1 cup of whole wheat flour (sifted, then measured)	4.5 oz
1 cup of cornmeal (dip and sweep)	4.5 oz
1 cup of cornstarch (lightly spooned or sifted)	4.2 oz
Fats, liquids, and eggs	
1 large egg (without shell)*	1.75 oz
1 cup of butter	8 oz
1 cup of vegetable shortening	6.75 oz
1 cup of vegetable oil	7.7 oz
1 cup of heavy cream	8.2 oz
1 cup of sour cream	8.5 oz
Sweeteners	
1 cup of granulated sugar	7 oz
1 cup of dark brown sugar (packed)	8.4 oz
1 cup of light brown sugar (packed)	7.7 oz
1 cup of powdered sugar (dip and sweep)	4 oz
1 cup of honey, molasses or corn syrup	11.75 oz
Cocoa –	2.9 oz
Nuts	
1 cup pecan halves	3.5 oz
1 cup pecans – coarsely chopped	4 oz
1 cup walnut – halves	3.5 oz
1 cup walnuts – coarsely chopped	4 oz

Typical Pan Sizes and Capacities

RECIPE CALLS FOR	VOLUME	EQUIVALENT
<p>➤ Two 8-in. round pans</p> 	8 cups (2 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 8-in. square pan • One 9 x 5-in. loaf pan • One 8-in. tube pan • One 8-in. springform pan • One 9-in. bundt pan • 12 to 16 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)
<p>➤ Two 9 x 1 1/2-in. round pans</p> 	12 cups (3 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 10-in. square pan • Two 8 x 4-in. loaf pans • One 9-in. tube pan • One 10-in. springform pan • One 10-in. bundt pan • 18 to 24 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)
<p>➤ 9 x 5-in. loaf pan</p> 	8 cups (2 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 8-in. square pan • Two 8-in. round pans • One 8-in. tube pan • One 8-in. springform pan • One 9-in. bundt pan • 12 to 16 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)
<p>➤ 12-cup muffin pan</p> 	6 cups (1.5 L; 1/2 cup per muffin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 9 x 1 1/2-in. round pan • One 8 x 4-in. loaf pan • One 7-in. bundt pan • One 7-in. springform pan
<p>➤ 8-in. square pan</p> 	8 cups (2 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two 8-in. round pans • One 9 x 5-in. loaf pan • One 8-in. tube pan • One 8-in. springform pan • One 9-in. bundt pan • 12 to 16 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)
<p>➤ 13 x 9-in. rectangular pan</p> 	14 cups (3.5 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two 9 x 2-in. round pans • Two 8-in. square pans • Two 8-in. springform pans • Two 9 x 5-in. loaf pans • One 10-in. tube pan • 21 to 28 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)
<p>➤ 10-in. bundt pan</p> 	12 cups (3 L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two 9 x 1 1/2-in. round pans • Two 8 x 4-in. loaf pans • One 10-in. springform pan • One 10-in. square pan • One 17 1/2 x 12 1/2-in. jelly roll pan • 18 to 24 muffins (1/2 to 2/3 cup per muffin)

Calls for: 2 (8-inch) round cake pans

Volume: 8 cups

Use Instead: 2 (8 x 4-inch) loaf pans
2 (9-inch) round cake pans
1 (10-inch) Bundt pan
1 (11 x 7-inch) baking dish
1 (10-inch) springform pan
12-18 cupcakes

Calls for: 2 (9-inch) round cake pans

Volume: 12 cups

Use Instead: 2 (8 x 4-inch) loaf pans
2 (8-inch) round cake pans
1 (10-inch) Bundt pan
2 (11 x 7-inch) baking dishes
1 (10-inch) springform pan
18-24 cupcakes

Calls for: 9-inch springform pan

Volume: 10 cups

Use Instead: 1 (10-inch) round cake pan
1 (10-inch) springform pan
2 (8-inch) round cake pans
2 (9-inch) round cake pans
18-24 cupcakes

Calls for: 10-inch Bundt pan

Volume: 12 cups

Use Instead: 1 (9x13-inch) baking dish
2 (9-inch) round cake pans
2 (8-inch) round cake pans
2 (11x7-inch) baking dishes
1 (10-inch) springform pan
18-24 cupcakes

Calls for: 8 x 4-inch loaf pan

Volume: 6 cups

Use Instead: 1 (8-inch) round cake pan
1 (11 x 7-inch) baking dish
9-12 cupcakes

Calls for: 9 x 5-inch loaf pan

Volume: 8 cups

Use Instead: 1 (9 x 2-inch) deep dish pie plate
1 (10-inch) pie plate
1 (8-inch) square baking dish
1 (9-inch) square baking dish
12-18 cupcakes

Calls for: 8-inch square baking dish

Volume: 8 cups

Use Instead: 1 (9 x 2-inch) deep pie dish
1 (9 x 5-inch) loaf pan
2 (8-inch) regular pie dish
12-18 cupcakes

Calls for: 9 x 13 x 2-inch baking dish

Volume: 15 cups

Use Instead: 1 (10-inch) Bundt cake pan
2 (9-inch) round cake pans
3 (8-inch) round cake pans
1 (10 x 15-inch) jellyroll pan
24-36 cupcakes

A Little Terminology

Baguette (bag-ett) A long, thin loaf shaped like a cylinder. You've seen them down here in Louisiana. We cut 'em into Po-boy loaves.

Beating is stirring or whipping with a wire whip, mixer or beater to blend ingredients into a smooth mixture, or to add volume to ingredients by incorporating air, as in making a meringue.

Benching is nothing more than resting the dough just before shaping so that the gluten relaxes, making it easier to form.

Caramelization is the browning caused when sugar reaches 325°F. This is what gives the bread crust its color.

Degassing is removing CO₂ from the dough during the dividing or shaping stages. It is also referred to as punching down.

Docking is just poking tiny holes all over a flat bread (or a pie crust) before baking. These holes help to direct the rising in bread and prevent huge pockets forming during baking. You see this often in pizza dough. In pies the docking allows steam to escape for the same reason. You can use a special tool, called (yep) a docker. Or use a fork.

Fermentation is the yeast breaking down sugar into alcohol and CO₂ gas. The gas bubbles are trapped by the gluten (protein in flour). As the gas expands, the gluten stretches, and the dough rises. The alcohol produced by fermentation evaporates during baking.

Folding is when you roll the dough out flat, then fold it into itself as you would a letter, then roll flat again. And repeat.

Kneading is working the dough with the heel of your hands. Kneading transforms the dough into a soft, pliable dough.

Laminated Dough refers to the process of folding margarine or butter into dough multiple times to create very thin alternating layers of butter and dough. It has the appearance of a puff pastry sheet or croissant when baked.

Proofing is done to ensure that yeast is active, typically by adding it to warm water (about 105-110 F), stirring and letting it rest until it foams, or provides “proof” that it is active and will leaven your dough as expected.

Punching down is a short kneading process that deflates the dough so that it can go through another rising. Also referred to as degassing.

Retard is where you slow down (retard) the fermentation process by cooling the dough, usually in the refrigerator.

Turning Out is simply removing dough, cake or other product from a mixer by turning the bowl so the product comes out.



Punching down a dough

About the Ingredients

Baking Powder — used for leavening that is a combination of baking soda and either citric or tartaric acid or a mixture of the two. This powder, when it is wet and hot, will react without acid from other ingredients in the food that is baked.

Goods are made lighter because of the carbon dioxide that is produced by the powder. Over time, baking powder can lose its strength, and it should be tested if it has been sitting on the shelf for a while. Good baking powder will bubble strongly when one teaspoon of it is mixed with one-quarter cup of hot water.

Baking Soda — Baking soda reacts with an acid when it is wet to produce carbon dioxide and lighten baked goods. The wet, acidic ingredients that typically cause this reaction with baking soda in a batter include buttermilk, sour milk, citrus juices, chocolate, vinegar, or honey, and the reaction will begin immediately when liquids are added to the dry ingredients.

FLOUR

All-Purpose Flour: This basic flour is a pantry staple and can be used in most baked goods. Store flour in a tightly sealed canister.

Bread Flour: is super-high in gluten, so it's ideal for yeasted breads where you want a good amount of structure and chew.

Cake Flour: has the lowest protein (gluten) level of all the types of flour, making it great for tender cakes, biscuits or scones.

Pastry Flour: Pastry flour has a gluten level between that of cake flour and that of all-purpose flour; it's great in pie dough because it leads to a tender crust that isn't extremely fragile.

Self-Rising Flour: This is all-purpose flour with baking powder and salt have added. Use it only if the formula calls for it.

Whole-Wheat Flour: This flour still contains the outer kernel of the wheat — also known as wheat germ. You can substitute up to half of the all-purpose flour with whole wheat in most formulas. Any more than that and baked items may be tough. It will also cause breads to rise a bit slower, and not to as high a volume.

SUGAR AND OTHER SWEETENERS

Brown Sugar, Light or Dark: is white sugar with molasses added. Light and dark are generally interchangeable. Keep it very well wrapped in the original packaging or in an airtight container.

Confectioners' Sugar: Also called 10X or powdered sugar, this is granulated sugar that has been ground into a powder with cornstarch. It is commonly used in cake and cookie icings and is often dusted on desserts.

Granulated Sugar: Whenever our formulas say “sugar”, this is the stuff: plain white sugar, refined from sugar cane or beets. When stored properly in a tightly covered canister, it will last for years.

Honey: Store tightly sealed in a cool, dry place for up to one year. If the honey crystallizes, microwave it for about 30 seconds or melt it in the jar in a pan of hot water over low heat.

Molasses: is the liquid that is left behind from refining sugar. Light molasses is from the first boiling of the sugar syrup; dark is from the second; and blackstrap, the strongest, is from the third. Unsulphured molasses tends to have a cleaner flavor.

YEAST

Active Dry Yeast: This is yeast that has been dehydrated into tiny granules. Before using it must be reactivated or "bloomed" by being mixed with warm water (about 110 degrees F) and sometimes a small amount of sugar for the yeast to feed on. When we refer to "proofing" the yeast, this is what we mean.

Fresh Yeast: Fresh yeast is moist and very perishable. It must be used by the expiration date listed on the package, which is usually within two weeks of purchase. Fresh yeast can be stored longer by keeping it in the freezer, but before using it should be defrosted at room temperature and then used immediately.

Instant Yeast: is similar to active dry yeast, but with more porous granules that don't require the reactivation step. It works in about half the time of active dry yeast and can also be added straight to the dry ingredients in a dough formula.

Butter vs. Oleo vs. Shortening. And the **Winner is...**

Get ready to be either educated or bored. It depends on your point of view. We want to convince you that, about 90% of the time, Oleomargarine is just fine for baking; sometimes better.

One thing for sure: it's always less costly than butter, and our customers will appreciate that.

Butter and Oleo are oil and water emulsions. Oleo contains added emulsifiers to aid in the emulsion preparation. Butter in contrast contains milkfat lecithin, a natural emulsifier.

The function of fat in baking should help us to decide which one to use for baking. Fat plays a different role in each baking application. For this reason, in commercial practice a different formulation would be used for each purpose. First, let's look at the relative fat, water and salt content of each type of fat:

	% Fat	% Moisture	% Salt
Butter	81.5	16	2.4 – 2.6
Oleo (Margarine)	80	16	1.0 – 2.0
Typical Spread	70 – 75	20 – 25	1.0 – 1.8
Light Spread	60	35 – 40	1.0
Low Fat Spread	40	60	1.0

As you see, Oleo has almost the same content of fat and moisture as butter. Although the salt differs, the total amount of salt in a formula due to this difference is minimal. Let's consider the impact of these fats by category.

Breads

In bread making, fat provides some flavor but – more importantly – it lubricates the dough. This helps to retain the gases released during baking to ensure a well-risen loaf with a soft texture and a superior shelf life.

Because bread dough contains a large amount of water, the water content of the fat used should not matter. In fact, the difference between butter and oleo is not detectable in preparations of virtually all commercial bread. Substituting shortening in a bread formula shows no noticeable difference (although you should adjust water).

Cake Making

The function of fat in cakes is more complex. Cakes are usually made by creaming, where the fat is beaten with sugar until it becomes light, fluffy and pale in color. As air is being incorporated into the batter, the volume increases. The air is important because it forms sites which trap gases, water vapor from the moisture and carbon dioxide from the baking powder, which expand during baking.

Batter must be stable enough to retain these gases and create a cake with a light texture. If a fat has good creaming properties, and will trap and retain air, it should produce a good cake. Again, the difference between butter and margarine is negligible in terms of creaming quality, and the resulting cake texture will be very similar.

Cakes with rich or strong flavors will not benefit from the more complex and delicate flavor of butter (chocolate, for example). Likewise, cakes that will receive a heavy, sugary frosting or be flavored with syrups or fruit will also not benefit from butter, and oleo makes sense here as well.

On the other hand, a pound cake or sponge will be much better if made with butter.

Biscuits and Pastry

Biscuits and pastry are made with “shortening”. The fat is rubbed into the flour and surrounds the flour particles and excludes water. This prevents the development of gluten in the dough. The fat is said to shorten the dough (hence the name, “shortening”). Any increase in water in the mixture will tend to make biscuits hard and pastry heavy. In these cases, it’s actually be better to use shortening over butter or oleo, since both of these contain water.

Cookies

The use of fats in cookies is more noticeably as a flavoring agent, as well as a shortening and a lubricant. It is here that butter may be a good choice because the ratio of fat to other ingredients is much higher.

But consider the other factors of flavor: If you’re making a peanut butter chocolate chip cookie, perhaps you don’t need that butter? But, if you are making shortbread, there are only 4 ingredients and butter will certainly be one of them.

Choose wisely, grasshopper.



My Cake is Stuck in the Pan!

Freeze it. Then run a knife around the edge and give the bottom a good knock. That should do it but if not, use two forks, at opposite sides of the pan. Use them to lever the cake out of the pan.

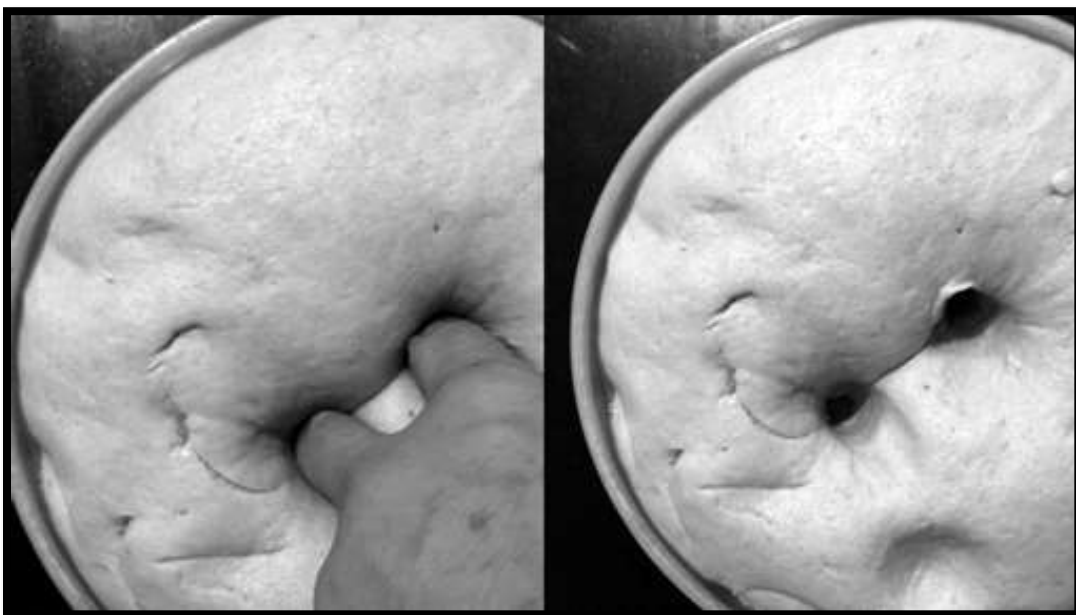
C'mon Man! Make Your Buttermilk...

Seriously, just make the stuff. You never run out. Here's how:

- Make a quart of milk from Powdered Milk, per the instructions.
- Add a 1/4 cup of lemon juice or vinegar
- Let it stand overnight in the open air (but covered)

Give Bread the Finger(s) Test

Here's a tip to tell if bread has doubled in volume: insert your index and middle fingers into the dough about 1/2 inch apart, up to your first knuckle. If the dough doesn't close up, and the indentations remain, the dough is considered to have doubled.



Bread

The most consumed food on planet Earth.

A cornerstone of civilization, it has been with us almost since we began using fire. We don't know exactly how or when it came to be, but we know that, by 300 B.C., yeast was commercially produced in ancient Egypt.

Not all bread uses yeast. Indeed, some of the most well-known breads are flat breads such as pita, naan from India, and the tortilla. But there is another group of breads that are leavened with baking powder, baking soda, and other.

It's all chemistry and each ingredient has a role in a good loaf:

Flour: the body of bread of course. When you add moisture, mix it and add heat, the proteins (gluten) in the flower link together into a network of fine webs made up of many strands. These strands form millions of tiny "pockets" that can trap gas, which expands as the dough heats. And when you heat the mixture long enough, the moisture cooks off and the pockets stay behind. You know it as all the holes in the bread.

Yeast: is the living stuff in the bread. A single-celled fungus is what it is, and it will multiply if it gets food and moisture. It's food of choice is sugar. In the right amount, you can make bread (or beer) to your heart's content. As it digests sugars (fermentation), it releases alcohol and CO₂. In baking, we're wanting the CO₂ gas. It expands, opening the gluten pockets and forming bubbles. If the dough is correctly made, then the pockets will remain stable during baking and you'll end up with a nice bread loaf, batata, boule, or maybe dinner roll.

Water: allows the flour to create the gluten matrix, and if used in the correct amount, it will mostly cook off during the baking process, resulting in a product that is moist but not “wet” or heavy.

Milk: like water, it helps the dough to develop its protein. Milk also helps dough brown evenly, and can produce a more tender loaf of bread. And, powdered milk actually works better. Add it to the flour when you scale in your dry ingredients.

Sugar: feeds the yeast, so it will multiply and throw off lots of the CO₂ gas we need. It’s also a tenderizer, helping to brown the bread through caramelization. And you know it adds flavor.

Salt: sort of like sugar, it performs a couple of tasks. It adds flavor. You know that. It also controls the rate of fermentation, or how fast the yeast multiplies, so it’s a sort of stabilizer and a yeast inhibitor. Never add it to your yeast directly but combine with the flour in a formula (recipe).

Shortening: it’s a solid fat, usually vegetable (that’s all SONOCO uses). It is a tenderizer and helps to produce more loft – a taller loaf. It interferes with how the gluten strands form. It “shortens” the strands, and that’s how it came to be called shortening. Like *shortbread* cookies.

Eggs: although in some baking, they act as a leavening. Sponge cakes, angel food cake, and choux pastry for example. But in a yeast dough, they work more as a binder, flavoring and perhaps a coloring agent. They can also make a dough richer.

So, what do you *really* need to make excellent bread? Just know that in Paris, a baguette is required to be made only from flour, water, salt and yeast. Bread is mostly about your skill and the time you are willing to spend achieving excellent results.

Basic Bread Dough

Yield: 4 nice loaves

3 3/4 cups water (warm about 105 F)
3 Tbsp dry yeast
1 1/3 cups milk powder
1/2 cup oleo or shortening
12 cups flour (approximate)
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp salt

- In mixer, put a cup of water and the yeast. Let the yeast proof.
- Add remaining water, the flour, and remaining ingredients to bowl.
- Mix on low about 2 minutes; just until ingredients pull together.
- Turn up the mixer speed to 2, then mix until the dough begins to pull away from the sides of the bowl. As you mix, pay attention to the dough. Add flour if it is sticky or water if it is too stiff.
- Turn the dough out of the bowl and round up. Transfer to another bowl that is lightly oiled; roll the dough to oil all sides.
- Let it rise (proof) until about double in size.
- Punch it down in the center to expel CO₂ gas, then round up and let rest a few minutes.
- Divide the dough into 4 pieces and shape each to the size and shape of a loaf pan.
- Place the loaves into greased or oiled loaf pans, seam side down, and cover with plastic film or a towel.
- Let rise until about 1 inch above the top of the pan.
- Bake at 350 F about 30 to 40 minutes. Check for doneness by removing and tapping the loaf bottom. If it sounds hollow, it's done (or check for an internal temperature of 190 F).

Basic Whole Wheat Bread

Yield: 4 nice loaves

3 3/4 cups water (warm about 105 F)
4 Tbsp dry yeast
1 1/3 cups milk powder
1/2 cup oleo or shortening
6 cups flour (approximate)
6 cups whole wheat flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp salt

- In mixer, put a cup of water and the yeast. Let the yeast proof.
- Add remaining water, the flour, and remaining ingredients to bowl.
- Mix on low about 2 minutes; just until ingredients pull together.
- Turn up the mixer speed to 2, then mix until the dough begins to pull away from the sides of the bowl. As you mix, pay attention to the dough. Add flour if it is sticky or water if it is too stiff.
- Turn the dough out of the bowl and round up. Transfer to another bowl that is lightly oiled; roll the dough to oil all sides.
- Let it rise (proof) until about double in size.
- Punch it down in the center to expel CO₂ gas, then round up and let rest a few minutes.
- Divide the dough into 4 pieces and shape each to the size and shape of a loaf pan.
- Place the loaves into greased or oiled loaf pans, seam side down, and cover with plastic film or a towel.
- Let rise until about 1 inch above the top of the pan.
- Bake at 350 F about 30 to 40 minutes. Check for doneness by removing and tapping the loaf bottom. If it sounds hollow, it's done (or check for an internal temperature of 190 F).



Whole Wheat Loaves

Buttery Dinner Rolls (Pan Rolls)

Yield: about 48 rolls in standard sheet pans

5	Tbsp	dry yeast
2 1/2	cups	warm water (105 to 110 F)
2	cups	milk, room temperature
1 1/2	cups	sugar
6	each	eggs
1 1/2	cups	melted oleo
15	cups	flour
1	Tbsp	salt

- In mixer, put the water and yeast. Let the yeast proof.
- To the yeast slurry, add all the flour, then the remaining ingredients to the bowl.
- Mix on low for about 2 minutes; just until the ingredients pull together. As you mix, pay attention to the dough. If you need, add flour if it is sticky or water if it is too stiff. Do this in small amounts!
- Turn up the mixer speed to 2, then mix until the dough begins to develop and pull away from the sides of the bowl
- Turn the dough out of the bowl and round up. Transfer to another bowl that is lightly oiled; roll the dough to oil all sides.
- Let it rise (proof) until about double in size.
- Punch it down in the center to expel CO₂ gas, then round up and let rest a few minutes.
- Divide dough into up to 48 pieces, depending on the needed size.
- Round up each piece and pan up so they touch each other.
- Let rise about 20 or 30 minutes.
- Bake at 350 F about 30 to 40 minutes until nicely brown.
- Brush tops with egg white / water for a shiny finish, or with oleo for a more “rustic” look.



Dinner Rolls

Dinner Roll Shapes

You can add interest to your dinner rolls by just changing the shape, or adding toppings. First, we'll cover some basic shapes:

Round

The old standard (you see them in the previous photo), these are fast and easy to prepare.

Using a bench knife (shown), divide the dough into pieces that will make a ball 2 inches in diameter. It will take a bit of practice, but you'll quickly get a feel for how much to cut.



Using the palm of your hand on a work surface, roll the dough into a ball. As it forms into a ball, "cup" your hand a bit to tighten up the shape. Use flour sparingly if you need to add any.



You can also roll between your palms as shown here. But the above method is faster if you learn to do one piece in each hand as you work the dough.



When finished, pan as usual.

Fan Rolls

These are easy and look like they took all day to make. And, you can add flavorings like garlic or cheese to kick them up.

Roll (sheet) the dough to 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into widths about the size of a muffin tin opening.

At this point you can put toppings: butter, herbs, cheese, onions, etc.

Stack the layers on top of one another, about 5 high but no more.

Seal an edge by pinching along the long side to hold the rolls together.

Cut into squares with a sharp knife or a bench knife. Do not use a “sawing” motion. Cut quickly with a single downward stroke.

Place into the tin as shown, with the seamed side down.



Knots

Dead simple and they look great. You can add toppings and flavorings after shaping as shown in some examples that follow.

Start with a sheet of dough about 3/4 inch thick. Cut into strips as shown at right. Then, roll each one into a cylinder (shown in same photo at bottom).



Then just tie each one into a knot and pan out. Let proof before baking. Keep them separated so they don't deform by touching as they bake.



You can add toppings once they're panned out. At right is a plain knot, and below right is a garlic knot.



It was buttered with garlic butter, baked and sprinkled with parsley after baking.

You can add cheese before baking, or in the dough. Also, you can use an egg wash to give a nice sheen to the finished product.



Parker House



After rolling the dough about 1/4 inch thick, cut it into strips about 2 inches wide.



Cut across the strips to produce pieces about 2 x 4 inches in size.



Fold each piece in half, leaving the top about 1/2 inch away from the edge of the bottom, as shown above



Place on a sheet pan with parchment liner (or lightly oiled), short side down. That is, the 2 ends should touch the pan.



Continue laying rolls on the pan, overlapping slightly as you see here. You can run multiple rows per pan, but leave space between rows.



Finished rolls, buttered after baking

Cloverleaf

Looks like you have mad skills. Even if you don't.

Roll dough about 1 inch thick. Cut into strips and roll into logs (or strings) as shown (and like you would for knots).



Lay out the strings as shown, and cut across them to make small chunks.



Round them into balls (you don't have to be precise here).



Place 3 of the balls in each place of an oiled muffin tin. Proof and bake.

If you want a shine, wash with egg white before baking (during proofing).

The finished product.



Pretzel Rolls. Just a simple variant on a bow knot roll.



Sheet the dough 1/3 inch thick. Then cut across for two pieces about 5 inches wide.

Last, cut into strips 1 inch wide.

Make a simple knot in each piece, being careful not to tear the dough or distort the shape.

A loose knot is all you are trying to make. It will tighten up as it proofs.



Brush each piece with egg wash (1 egg and 1 oz. water).

Top with salt, toasted onions, parmesan cheese, cinnamon & sugar...

the list is pretty long if you use your imagination.





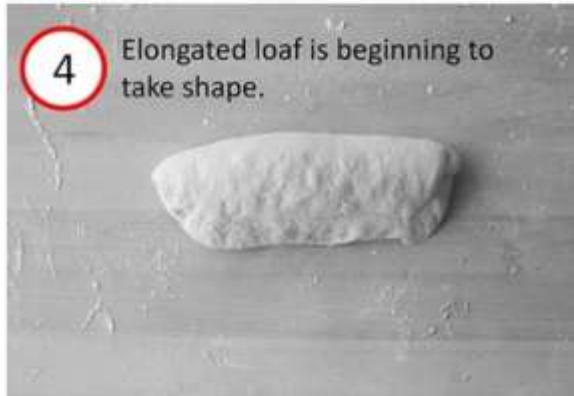
Pretzel rolls

Bread Sticks

Yield: 3 dozen bread sticks

2 cups water (105 to 110F)
4 Tbsp olive oil
1 3/4 tsp salt
4 1/2 cups flour
2 Tbsp yeast
As needed Italian seasoning and/or Parmesan cheese

- Lightly grease a half sheet pan, and drizzle 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil in the bottom.
- In mixer, combine all ingredients, blend at high speed 60 seconds.
- Scoop the sticky batter into the sheet pan, spreading almost to edges. Oil your fingers to prevent the dough from sticking.
- Use a bench knife or pizza wheel to score the dough across the pan in 1-inch strips. Score the down the pan length in the center to divide each strip in half.
- Cover the pan with plastic film; let the dough rise at room temperature for 60 minutes, till it's become puffy.
- Drizzle the dough lightly with olive oil, and sprinkle with Italian seasoning, cheese or whatever toppings you are using.
- Bake at 375 F to a light golden brown – about 25 or 30 minutes.
- Remove from the oven, turn out of the pan and let cool.
- As soon as you can handle it, cut the dough along the score lines.
- Put sticks back on sheet pan but on the edges, touching is fine.
- Bake another 5 minutes.
- Remove and serve warm or at room temperature.



Shaping Baguettes or Batards (recipes follow)

French Bread

Okay, let's talk about "French Bread". In France, they don't just make one kind of loaf and it sure isn't the soft, bland loaf we find in the local superstores and retail chains. Common types include:

Pain de Mie – is their version of the American loaf bread, popular for sandwiches. Pain de Mie literally means "the interior of bread."

Pain de Campagne – literally means "country bread" and is typically a large, round or rectangular loaf. Often made with white, wheat and rye flour, it has a flavor somewhat like a mild version of sourdough.

Baguette (and the Bâtard) – are what we think of when we think "French" bread. The baguette is a thin loaf, usually no more than a couple of inches in diameter, while the bâtard is more like the loaf you see everywhere; a fattish, blimp-like loaf.

And that's where the similarity ends. The Bread Decree of 1993 says that if you want to be registered as a boulangerie (bakery) then here are the only ingredients you can use to make a baguette or bâtard:

flour, salt, yeast, and water.

That's it. So, when you see formulas for a "great" French bread with all the other stuff, well, it just ain't French bread. And, because they don't have much yeast or any sugar, they take a longer time to develop. This improves the structure of the bread and also gives it its characteristic crust and "chew".

The next couple of formulas are the real deal. If you really want to master bread making, give them a try.

Baguettes (French Bread) 101

This is a good formula that will yield a nice, chewy textured loaf. Great for a messy roast beef po-boy.

Yield: about 6 baguettes, each 16 inches long

6	cups	flour
2	cups	lukewarm water (you may need a bit more in mixing)
4	tsp	dry yeast
1	Tbsp	salt

- In mixing bowl, combine flour yeast, salt and water. Blend until thoroughly combined and a soft dough is formed. If you need, add up to 1/2 cup water at this stage. You don't want a sticky dough.
- Cover the bowl and let rest 30 minutes.
- Knead the dough (in mixer or by hand) until the dough develops, pulls away from the bowl and has a smooth surface.
- Turn out into a lightly oiled bowl, cover the dough and let it proof until doubled in size (about 1 1/2 hours).
- Remove from the bowl, punch down the dough, fold it back into a ball, then cover again and proof another 1 1/2 hours.
- Turn out onto a work surface. You prefer the surface oiled, floured or nothing. It really depends on the dough's stickiness.
- Divide the dough into six equal pieces, round up and let rest for 5 minutes or so.
- Begin shaping the loaves as shown in the photos that precede this formula.
- After shaping, place on sheet pans, cover with oiled plastic and let proof an hour.

Set up your oven:

- About half an hour before baking, set oven temperature to **450°F**.
- Place a cast iron skillet on the oven deck.
- Put 2 or 3 cups of water on to boil.
- Uncover the loaves. Using a very sharp knife held at about a 45° angle, make three to five long lengthwise slashes in each baguette. Don't go very deep; you just want to open the loaf up a bit.
- Load the baguettes into the oven.
- **Carefully** pour the boiling water into the cast iron pan, and quickly shut the oven door. This is key to creating the crusty texture of a good baguette. The steam will also produce a sheen on the crust.
- Bake between 25 and 30 minutes. They should be a nutty brown on the outside, and if you remove one and tap on the bottom, it will sound hollow when completely done.



Baguettes... **Like a Boss** (with a Poolish)

Poolish? What you talkin bout Willis?

First developed in 19th century Poland, a poolish is a starter for dough, most often used in French bakery products. It is referred to as a pre-ferment. It's made with flour and water and a bit of yeast. It helps to produce a better loaf of bread.

It's also called a sponge. You make a poolish, let it ferment for a time and then add it to your dough either as the leavening (like a sourdough starter), or in addition to the yeast in a formula.

Poolish Starter

1	cup	cool water
1/8	tsp	dry yeast
2	cups	flour

- Mix everything together to make a soft dough. You can mix by hand in a bowl.
- Cover with plastic and leave out at room temperature overnight or 16 hours.
- It will have expanded and become bubbly.
- It is ready to use. If not using immediately, you can refrigerate for a short time.
- Let it come back to room temp before using.



Yield: about 6 baguettes

2	tsp	yeast
2 1/4	cups	lukewarm water
7	cups	flour (variable, you may need a bit more)
4	tsp	salt
	ALL	the starter (Poolish)

- Mix and knead everything together by hand or in to make a soft, somewhat smooth dough; it should hold together but the surface will be a bit rough. If using a stand mixer, knead for about 4 minutes on medium-low. The dough will stick on the bowl bottom.
- Turn dough out into a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and let rise for 1 hour then gently deflate it, folding the edges into the center.
- Repeat after another hour (hour 2) and let it proof another hour.
- After the 3rd hour turn out onto a lightly oiled surface. Gently deflate it, and divide into 6 equal pieces.
- Round each piece into a ball. Cover with oiled plastic wrap, and let rest at least 15 minutes. You can also wait up to an hour.

Time to make the baguettes **(photos precede these formulas)**

- For each baguette, flatten the dough slightly then fold it nearly (but not quite) in half, sealing the edges with the heel of your hand. Turn the dough around, and repeat: fold, then flatten.
- Repeat this whole process again; the dough should have started to elongate itself **(refer to the photos that precede these formulas)**
- With the seam side down, cup your fingers and gently roll the dough into a 16" log. Taper each end of the log slightly.
- Place the loaves seam-side down onto sheet pans (either oiled or with parchment liner)
- Cover them with lightly oiled plastic wrap, and allow the loaves to rise until they're slightly larger. They won't double in bulk but give them about an hour to proof at room temperature.

Set up your oven:

- About half an hour before baking, set oven temperature to **450°F**.
- Place a cast iron skillet on the oven deck.
- Put 2 or 3 cups of water on to boil.
- Uncover the loaves. Using a very sharp knife held at about a 45° angle, make three to five long lengthwise slashes in each baguette. Don't go very deep; you just want to open the loaf up a bit.
- Load the baguettes into the oven.
- **Carefully** pour the boiling water into the cast iron pan, and quickly shut the oven door. This is key to creating the crusty texture of a good baguette. The steam will also produce a sheen on the crust.
- Bake between 25 and 30 minutes. They should be a nutty brown on the outside, and if you remove one and tap on the bottom, it will sound hollow when completely done.
- You can freeze the baguettes for later. Alternatively, you can just eat a bunch with lots of butter. Now that's what I'm talkin bout!



Bâtard

You can make the bâtard by following the previous recipe exactly, up to the point where you divide the dough.

At that point, you can divide it into 4 pieces to make larger loaves. Shape as you would in general for the baguette, but make it larger in diameter.

Proof the loaves about the same amount of time, but you will bake them about 40 minutes or so. Check them for doneness at 40 minutes.

Or, you can divide into 6 pieces as for baguettes, but shape them into a shorter, somewhat stubbier loaf. Proof as in the formula above, and bake about 30 minutes.



Focaccia (no Kneading)

Focaccia is a great flatbread you can use in several ways; cut into bread sticks and served with olive oil; split it for a great panini; just serve it as a side for Italian theme meals. Drizzle on some olive oil, lightly salt it and that's all you need. Or, a bit of rosemary or Parmesan cheese.

This formula requires no kneading.

Yield: 1 half sheet pan (12 x 18)

1/4	cup	olive oil (for the pan)
3	cups	warm water
2/3	cup	olive oil (for the dough)
1	Tbsp	salt
7	cups	flour
2 1/2	Tbsp	yeast

- Prep a half sheet pan with half of the 1/4 cup of olive oil. Spread evenly across the entire pan and set aside.
- In a mixer, combine all remaining ingredients and mix on medium to high speed for about a minute.
- Scoop the very sticky batter out into the pan, spread evenly and cover it with oiled plastic wrap. Proof it for an hour.
- While the dough is proofing, set the oven to 375 F.
- Before putting the bread in the oven, “dock” it (see the Terminology section), then drizzle the remaining olive oil all over the dough.
- Sprinkle seasoning all over the oil now. You can just use light salting, or cracked pepper, or parmesan or Italian seasoning.
- Bake for about half an hour.

- Remove from the oven, let it cool about 5 minutes, then turn out of the pan and onto a cooling rack.
- Cut into pieces. An example of a good size is shown here:



Pizza Dough – Traditional Crust

This is a relatively undemanding dough; easy to work with good results.

Yield: 4 each, 12-inch pizzas (or 3 each 14-inch)

2	cups	lukewarm water
1	Tbsp	sugar
2	Tbsp	olive oil
1	Tbsp	yeast
6	cups	flour
1	Tbsp	salt

- In bowl, combine water, sugar, oil and yeast. Mix until yeast dissolves, then let proof until yeast foams.
- Add 5 cups flour and the salt; mix on low until it begins to pull together. Add flour as needed to make a soft, smooth dough.
- Knead in the mixer at a medium speed until the dough is fully developed (smooth and elastic) – about 7 to 10 minutes.
- Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover with film and let proof an hour (or up to 2 hours if you need to – at room temperature).
- Punch down the dough, round it up, then divide into pieces: 4 each for the 12-inch, or 3 for a 14-inch crust.
- Round each piece into a ball and let rest about 10 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 450 F

- Roll out each piece into a round a bit larger than the size you desire. Or, you can work it by hand as shown in the movies 🤪.
- Time for toppings. You know what to do.



Pizza Crust – THIN and Crispy

This simple formula produces a great dough that can be frozen too.

Yield: 4 pizzas, about 12 inch

5	cups	flour
1 1/2	Tbsp	yeast
2	cups	warm water (about 105 F – 110 F)
1/2	tsp	salt
2	Tbsp	olive oil
As needed		cornmeal for sprinkling (and some authenticity)

- In mixer, add the water and sprinkle yeast on top. Let it proof until foamy.
- Add flour, oil and salt. Combine until blended on low speed.
- Turn up speed to begin kneading for about 7 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and elastic, and dough is cleaning the bowl. If it is too slack, add flour a very little bit at a time.
- You can leave in the bowl and cover. Let proof about half an hour.
- Set the oven to 425 or 450 F
- Turn out dough, divide into 4 pieces for 12-inch pies. Round up the dough and let it rest another 5 minutes.
- Lightly oil your pans, then sprinkle with cornmeal.
- Shape the dough into thin, flat rounds with a rolling pin (unless you have mad pizza dough handling skills, use the pin).
- Place on the pan, adjust shape, and top the pies with the toppings of your choice.
- Bake up to 20 minutes but check after 10. Ovens will vary, and this dough is thin. Also, this is highly dependent on the degree of crispness you want.

Texas Toast

This no-knead formula produces a yeasty, coarsely textured bread that stands up to all sorts of stuff. Use it for Texas toast, make fantastic patty melts or grilled cheese or the ultimate French Toast.

Yield: 2 loaf pans

6	cups	flour
2	Tbsp	sugar
1	Tbsp	salt
1/2	tsp	baking soda
2 1/2	Tbsp	yeast
2	cups	milk
1/2	cup	water
1/4	cup	vegetable oil (or melted oleo)

- Prepare the loaf pans: grease them lightly and set aside.
- In mixer, combine all the dry ingredients.
- Combine milk, water and oil in a saucepan; heat to 125 F
- Pour the liquid into the dry mixture
- Mix on medium-high to high for 1 minute until dough is smooth.
- Scoop into loaf pans, cover with plastic wrap sprayed with oil.
- Let proof until it just rises above the pan – about 45 minutes.
- While dough is proofing, set oven to 400 F.
- Bake the bread for about 25 minutes or until golden brown.
- Bread is done when its internal temperature is 1190 F, or if you tap on the bottom and it sounds hollow.
- Remove from the oven, let cool about 5 minutes before turning out of the pan and onto a cooling rack.
- When completely cool, cut into thick slices and season, then grill and serve. Or use as sandwich bread (which you can grill).

Cakes,
Cobblers,
Coffee Cakes
& Cake Mix Hacks

Apple Cake

Have some apples that don't look so good? Tired of making apple pie? Try this simple cake recipe. The original calls for Granny Smith apples, which are tart, so we've added lemon juice to brighten it up when using a standard Delicious apple (red or golden).

Yield: a 9 x 13 cake pan (or you can use a Bundt pan)

1	recipe	Cream Cheese Frosting
2 1/2	lbs	apples (this is about 6 or so medium apples, or 4 large)
1	cup	pecans, chopped, toasted (just bake a couple minutes)
1/2	cup	oleo, melted
1	cup	sugar, granulated
1	cup	brown sugar, loosely packed
2	each	eggs
1	Tbsp	lemon juice
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring
2	cups	flour
2	tsp	ground cinnamon
1	tsp	baking soda
1	tsp	salt

- Set oven to 350. Prepare the pans (parchment or grease/flour).
- Peel and slice the apples into thin wedges.
- In a bowl, stir together oleo, sugars, eggs, lemon juice and vanilla.
- In a separate bowl, blend dry ingredients, then add to wet; stir.
- Fold in apples and pecans. To form a very thick batter.
- Put in the pan, bake about 45 minutes but check at 35 or so.
- When done, remove, let cool 15 minutes before turning out.
- Let cool completely before topping with cream cheese frosting. The frosting is optional, and you can serve without it if you like.

Banana Poke Cake

This is a great way to get rid of some bananas. And eat some pudding.

Yield: 1 pan 9 x 13

2 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1 1/2	tsp	ground cinnamon
1/2	tsp	salt
1/4	tsp	baking soda
2	cups	granulated sugar
3	each	eggs
1	cup	veg oil
1/2	cup	buttermilk (make ahead using SONOCO recipe)
1 1/2	tsp	vanilla extract
2	cups	over ripe bananas, mashed
4	cups	prepared vanilla pudding (with 1 Tbsp vanilla added)
5 or 6	each	ripe bananas, sliced
24	each	crushed vanilla wafers
1/4	cup	oleo, melted
1	Tbsp	granulated sugar
1/2	cup	chopped, toasted pecans
2	cups	whipped topping

- In a bowl, combine flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and soda.
- In mixer, beat together sugar, eggs, oil, buttermilk and vanilla.
- Add in the flour mixture a third at a time, blending at low speed until just smooth. Scrape bowl between additions.
- Fold in the bananas, and transfer to the prepared baking pan.
- Bake at 350 F about 35 minutes, but check at 30 for doneness.

- Remove, let cool about 10 minutes, then poke deep holes all over the cake in a grid pattern, about 6 across and 8 on the long side.
- When the cake is cool, pour on a layer of pudding, then layer the bananas, then the rest of the pudding.
- Top with the whipped cream and put in the refrigerator to cool for at least two hours.

- While the cake is cooling, combine the melted oleo, vanilla wafers, sugar and pecans together to make a crumb topping.
- Bake for a few minutes until it is crispy and a bit brown.
- Remove, let cool completely and sprinkle on the whip topping.
- Portion the cake and serve.

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Carrot Cake. The Best Carrot Cake. Period.

Try to find a better carrot cake. Can't be done because this is the ultimate. Seriously. It's a long list of ingredients but dead easy to make. Use the Cream Cheese Frosting, or you can try the Brown Sugar Cream Cheese Frosting (immediately following the cake formula)

Yield: 3 each 9-inch layers, or a shallow sheet cake 1/2 pan

1 1/2	cups	pecans, chopped
1	Tbsp	butter, melted
	Pinch	salt
2 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking soda
1 1/2	tsp	ground cinnamon
1/2	tsp	ground nutmeg
1/4	tsp	ground cloves (optional but nice to have)
1/2	tsp	salt
1/2	cup	butter, softened
1	cup	granulated sugar
1	cup	brown sugar, packed
1/2	cup	veg oil
3	each	eggs
3/4	cup	buttermilk
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
1	tsp	lemon juice
3	cups	fresh carrots, grated
1	cup	fresh apple, peeled and grated
1	cup	sweetened flaked coconut

- Set the oven to 350 F
- Prepare the pans with parchment or grease well and flour.

- In a bowl, toss the pecans in melted butter with pinch of salt. Transfer to a sheet pan and toast in the oven until fragrant. Set aside.
- In another bowl, combine flour, soda, spices and salt. Set aside.
- In mixer, cream butter and both sugars until fluffy.
- Add oil and blend; then add eggs, one at a time until just blended.
- Begin adding flour and buttermilk in alternating batches, start with and end with the flour. Scrape the bowl between additions.
- Fold in the vanilla, carrots, and coconut until blended, then add the apples and pecans.
- After folding in all ingredients, scale into the prepared pans.
- Bake about 28 minutes but check at 24 for doneness.
- Cool completely before frosting with Brown Sugar Cream Cheese Frosting.



Hummingbird Cake

No idea how it got its name, but it's an old Southern standby. Pineapple, bananas and cream cheese frosting combine to make a rich cake that is surprisingly easy to make. You can easily mix by hand.

Yield: This formula will yield 3 each 9-inch layers. If you want to use sheet cake, you can fill 2 each 9 x 13 pans not completely full and stack them. Either way, this should be presented as a layer cake.

3	cups	flour
2	cups	granulated sugar
1	tsp	salt
1 1/2	tsp	ground cinnamon
3	each	eggs, beaten
1 1/2	cups	vegetable oil
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
1	cup	crushed pineapples, with juice (8 oz. can)
3	each	ripe bananas, chopped
1	cup	pecans, chopped and toasted (be SURE to toast them)
1	recipe	cream cheese frosting

- Set the oven to 350 F. Prepare the pans with parchment or grease and flour them well.
- In a bowl, combine dry ingredients; mix together.
- Add the eggs and oil; stir until just blended
- Gently fold in the vanilla, pineapples, bananas and pecans.
- Divide evenly into the pans.
- Bake about 25 minutes until done (a toothpick inserted in the center will come out clean).
- Remove, cool about 15 minutes before turning out of pans.
- Cool completely before frosting.

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Hummingbird Cake
Photo: King Arthur Flour Co.

Pound Cake

The original was so named because it used a pound of each ingredient. And it was as heavy as lead. This, on the other hand, is a timely textured, light and moist cake. There is no leavening in this cake, so be sure that you incorporate air in the batter during mixing.

Yield: two loaf pans

1	lb	butter, softened
3	cups	sugar
6	each	eggs
4	cups	flour
3/4	cup	milk
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring (or half vanilla and half almond)

Set oven to 300 F

In mixer, cream butter at medium speed until it is creamy and light. Add sugar gradually, mixing at medium speed, until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating until the yellow disappears. With mixer at low speed, begin adding flour and milk alternately. 3 additions of flour and 2 of milk (so you start and end with flour). Scrape bowl between additions. Stir in the vanilla (or vanilla / almond) extracts. Pour into pans lined with parchment or well-greased and floured. Bake about 75 minutes, but begin checking at an hour for doneness. Remove from oven, let cool about 15 minutes before turning out. Let cool, then slice and serve.

Lemon Pound Cake

The original was so named because it used a pound of each ingredient. And it was as heavy as lead. This, on the other hand, is a timely textured, light and moist cake. There is no leavening in this cake, so be sure that you incorporate air in the batter during mixing.

Yield: two loaf pans

1	lb	butter, softened
3	cups	sugar
6	each	eggs
4	cups	flour
1/2	cup	milk
3	Tbsp	lemon juice
2	Tbsp	lemon zest
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring

- Set oven to 300 F

- In mixer, cream butter at medium speed until creamy and light.
- Add sugar gradually, mixing at medium, until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs one at a time, beating until the yellow disappears.
- With mixer at low speed, begin adding flour and milk alternately. 3 additions of flour and 2 of milk (so you start and end with flour). Scrape bowl between additions.
- Stir in the vanilla, lemon juice and zest. Distribute it well.
- Pour into pans lined with parchment or well-greased and floured.
- Bake about 75 minutes, but begin checking at an hour for doneness.
- Remove from oven, let cool about 15 minutes before turning out.
- Let cool, then slice and serve.

Sweet Potato Pound Cake

Yes, you really can use those leftover baked sweet potatoes for something other than pie. Yes, a far nobler, tastier purpose.

Yield: 2 loaf pans

1/2	lb	cream cheese (1 small package)
1/2	cup	oleo, softened
2	cups	granulated sugar
4	each	eggs
3	cups	cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
3	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1	tsp	baking soda
1/4	tsp	salt
1	tsp	ground cinnamon
1/4	tsp	ground nutmeg
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring

- Set oven to 350 F
- In mixer, beat cream cheese and oleo until creamy.
- Add sugar, beating until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time and blend until yellow disappears.
- Add vanilla and sweet potatoes and beat well.
- Combine all remaining dry ingredients, and add to the mixer gradually in 3 additions. Scrape bowl between additions.
- Portion into prepared loaf pans (either with parchment paper, or well-greased and floured).
- Bake about 70 minutes but begin checking at 60 for doneness.
- Remove, let cool before turning out of pan. When completely cool, slice and serve.

Ultimate Chocolate Pound Cake

Yield: Two 9 x 5 loaf pans

1	lb	butter, softened
4	cups	granulated sugar
7	each	eggs
1	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring
1	Tbsp	instant coffee granules
1/4	cup	strong coffee
1 1/3	cups	buttermilk
2 2/3	cups	flour
1	cup	cocoa powder
3/4	tsp	baking powder

- Set the oven to 300 F. prepare the loaf pans with oil and flour
- In a bowl, combine dry ingredients and set aside.
- In yet another bowl, dissolve coffee granules in coffee. Add buttermilk and vanilla to this and set aside.

- In mixer, cream butter and sugar about 5 minutes. Scrape bowl. The mixture should be light and fluffy and pale in color
- Beat in the eggs one at a time, mixing about 30 seconds per egg.
- Start adding flour, then buttermilk, in two additions each. First add flour, blend until smooth and add buttermilk. Repeat.
- Pour the batter into the prepared pans (or a Bundt or tube pan).
- Bake about 75 minutes or so. Start checking at an hour. The key to pound cake is not cooking too quickly or the outside will be dark.
- When done, remove and let cool before turning out of the pan.
- When cool, either slice and serve, or you can top with the Satiny Chocolate Poured Icing.

Simple Cobbler

This basic cobbler recipe uses canned pie filling or canned fruit like peaches. You can simply use any fruit filling you like (as long as it has solid fruit in it, so you can't use lemon pie filling for example). The batter rises up and surrounds the filling as it bakes.

Yield: a 9 x 13 pan

1/2	cup	oleo
2	cups	flour
1 1/2	cups	granulated sugar
2	Tbsp	baking powder
1 1/2	cups	milk
2	cans	pie filling (or if you use canned fruit, drain it)
1/2	cup	granulated sugar

- Set the oven to 350 F
- In baking pan, place the oleo and melt it. While waiting...

- Combine flour, sugar and baking powder in a bowl. Mix
- Add the milk, blend well and pour directly into the pan with oleo.
- Spoon the pie filling onto the top of the batter. Drop it in even amounts all over the pan.
- Evenly sprinkle the granulated sugar over the top of the filling and batter mixture.
- Bake about an hour but check at 45 minutes. When the batter is set, the cobbler is done. Remove and serve warm.

Cake Mix Hacks

(stuff you can put on, or in, cake mix to make it awesome)

Black Forest Cake

This simple cake is made with cake mix, cherry pie filling, and whipped topping.

Yield: a 2-layer cake, or 10 to 12 servings if portioned properly

1 box cake mix
1 can cherry pie filling
2 to 3 cups whipped topping
Chocolate chips as needed

- Prepare the cake mix according to package directions. Let cool.
- //Slice the crown from each layer, shown here, to flatten the layer.

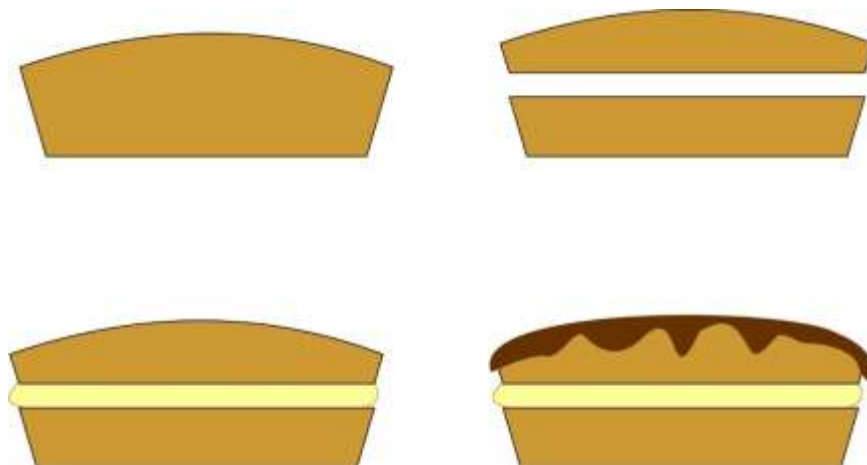
- Set the bottom layer on a plate, and top with half the cherry pie filling.
 - Place the next layer on top.
 - Spread the remaining pie filling on top of the layer.
 - Decorate the top edge of the cake with the whipped topping.
 - Top with chocolate chips if you like.

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Boston Cream “Pie”

This is really a cake, split and filled with cream and topped with chocolate frosting. Easy to make and easier to eat.

-
- Yield: three 9-inch pies
-
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 6 cups prepared vanilla pudding, chilled and set
- 3 cups Satiny Chocolate Poured Icing (recipe this section)
- Or:
- 4 cup Chocolate Buttercream Frosting (recipe this section)
-
- Set oven to 350 F. Prep 3 pie tins with shortening and flour.
- Prepare the cake mix according to the package directions.
- Scale the batter into each pie tin, about 2/3 full.
- Bake until done, about 25 minutes (check at 20).
- Remove, let cool about 10 minutes and turn out of the pan.
- Let cool completely and split the layers as shown.
- Portion 1/3 of the pudding into each bottom layer.
- Put on the top layer
- Frost or ice with the chocolate topping, then slice to serve.



Boston Cream Pie Variations

You can do many versions of this, all of them popular:

Yellow Cake

- Chocolate pudding
- Banana pudding

Chocolate Cake

- Vanilla pudding
- Chocolate pudding
- Banana pudding

You can also do cupcakes like these. Use a poured icing if you do.





Boston Cream Pie

Cinnamon Streusel Coffee Cake

Yield: 1 pan 9 x 13

2	cups	crushed graham crackers
3/4	cup	brown sugar, packed
1	cup	chopped pecans
1 1/2	tsp	ground cinnamon
3/4	cup	oleo, melted
1	box	yellow cake mix
1	cup	powdered sugar
1	Tbsp	water
1	Tbsp	honey or cornstarch

- Set the oven to 350. Prepare a pan with shortening and flour.
- In a bowl, combine crackers, brown sugar, pecans and cinnamon.
- Add in the butter and blend to make a crumble topping. Set aside.
- Make the cake mix per the package directions.
- Pour half the batter into the pan, then sprinkle half the crumble topping onto the batter.
- Pour or spoon remaining batter over the topping, then put the remaining topping evenly over the batter.
- Bake about 45 minutes but check at 40 minutes for doneness.
- Remove and let cool about 10 minutes before turning out.
- Meanwhile, make a glaze with the powdered sugar, water and honey. Mix together until smooth.
- Drizzle in thin “strings” all over the top of the cake.
- Portion and serve.



Cinnamon Streusel Coffee Cake

Jell-O Cake

Just a white cake, the Jell-O of your choice and some whipped topping and you've got yourself a simple and popular dessert.

Yield: 9 x 13 cake pan

1 box white cake mix and the stuff it calls for
2 cups prepared Jell-O (meaning it's made, but not set)
As needed whipped topping

- Set the oven to 350. Prepare a pan with shortening and flour.
- Make, and bake, the cake as package directions call for.
- Let it cool – this is important – IN THE PAN.
- When cooled, poke a holes liberally in the cake with a fork.
- Pour the liquid Jell-O evenly over the top of the cake.
- Refrigerate until the Jell-O is completely set.
- Remove, spread whip topping over the top of the cake
- Portion and place pieces on plates.



Photo: Kraftrecipes.com

Just Another Crumby Coffee Cake

This calls for sour cream, but you can use Greek yogurt instead.

Yield: 9 x 13 cake pan

Topping (make first)

1 1/4	cup	flour
3/4	cup	brown sugar
1/2	cup	granulated sugar
1/2	tsp	salt
1	tsp	ground cinnamon
1	tsp	vanilla
1/2	cup	oleo, cut into cubes

Cake

1	box	yellow cake mix
1	each	egg
1	cup	sour cream (or Greek yogurt, plain or vanilla)
1/4	cup	oleo, melted
1	tsp	vanilla

- Set oven to 350 F. Prepare a pan with oil and flour, or parchment.
- Combine topping ingredients except chilled oleo. Blend together, then cut in the oleo. It should be crumbly in texture. Set aside.
- Make cake batter: combine all ingredients and blend. Small lumps are okay here but overall it should be a somewhat smooth batter.
- Spread half the batter in the pan, then half the crumble mixture.
- Repeat the step, spreading topping over entire top of cake.
- Bake about 35 minutes but check after 30 for doneness.



Just Another Crumby Coffee Cake

Lemon Angel Cake Bars

Simple to prepare using a cake mix, and an easy frosting recipe.

Yield: pan 9 x 13 or 10 x 15 (a thinner cake in a half sheet pan)

1 pack angel food cake mix
1 can lemon pie filling
1 cup shredded coconut

- Set oven to 350. Prep the pan with shortening and flour
- In a large bowl, combine the ingredients until blended.
- Spread into the prepared pan.
- Bake about 25 minutes but check after 20 for doneness.
- Let cool completely either in the pan, or turn out and put on a rack.

Frosting

1 8 oz package cream cheese
1/2 cup oleo, softened
1 tsp vanilla flavoring
3 cup powdered sugar
1 tsp lemon extract
3 tsp grated lemon peel (zest)

- In mixer, blend the cream cheese, vanilla, lemon juice and oleo until light and fluffy.
- Add powdered sugar, a cup at a time, beating in well.
- Scrape bowl and mix again, then fold in lemon zest.
- Decorate cooled cake and cut into portions.



Lemon Angel Cake Bars

Pumpkin Pie Cake

Well which is it? Who cares? And the debate rages on...

Yield: 9 x 13 pan

1	each	egg
1/4	cup	oleo, melted
1	box	yellow cake mix
4	each	eggs
1	can	pumpkin (29 ounces)
1 1/2	cups	sugar, granulated
2	tsp	ground cinnamon
1	tsp	ginger
1/4	tsp	nutmeg
1/2	tsp	cloves
2	cups	evaporated milk
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring

- Set oven to 350 F and prepare pan with oil and flour or parchment.
- Whisk together melted oleo and 1 egg.
- Add yellow cake and mix with fork until it is crumbly.
- Line bottom of the baking pan with HALF the cake mixture.
- In a bowl, beat 4 eggs, add pumpkin, sugar and spices. Blend and add the evaporated milk. Stir in until well blended.
- Pour this into the baking pan, then top with remaining cake mixture. The pan will seem like it's too full.
- Bake between an hour and 1 1/4 hours. Check after an hour.
- Remove when done (the center may still be soft, but a knife will come out clean if inserted halfway from center).
- Let cool, then chill before serving.
- Whipped cream is good as a topping.



Pumpkin Pie Cake (with toasted nuts for lagniappe)

Pumpkin Spice Muffins

Two ingredients. One awesome muffin. Sorry it's so complicated...

Yield: about 30 muffins

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 can (15 oz) solid pack pumpkin (not the pie filling mix)

- Set the oven to 350 F
- Prep the muffin tin with either baking cups or oil well and flour.
- Mix the two ingredients
- Scale into muffin tins, about 3/4 full.
- Bake about 25 minutes but check after 20.
- Remove. Cool. Serve
-
-
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Option: You can also add some nuts to the batter, or sprinkle on top just before baking.



Cookies, Brownies & Bars

Basic Chip Cookie Recipe

Pick your chips. Mix and match. This is a great basic formula for any kind of “chip” cookie you like.

Yield: about 10 dozen cookies

4 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking soda
2	tsp	salt
1	lb	oleo, softened to room temperature
1 1/2	cups	granulated sugar
1 1/2	cups	brown sugar (packed)
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
4	each	eggs
4	cups	chips (chocolate, peanut butter, etc.)
2	cups	nuts, chopped (optional)

- COMBINE flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl.
- In mixer, blend oleo, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Gradually beat in flour mixture. When the flour is just blended in, remove from mixer.
- Stir in chips and nuts.
- Portion onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper.
- BAKE for 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown.
- Cool on baking sheets for just a couple of minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

Classic Chocolate Chip Cookies

Yield: about 10 dozen cookies

4 1/2 cups flour
2 tsp baking soda
2 tsp salt
1 lb oleo, softened to room temperature
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
1 1/2 cups brown sugar (packed)
2 tsp vanilla flavoring
4 each eggs
4 cups chocolate chips
2 cup pecans, coarsely chopped

- COMBINE flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl.
- In mixer, blend oleo, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Gradually beat in flour mixture. When the flour is just blended in, remove from mixer.
- Stir in chips and nuts.
- Portion onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper.
- BAKE for 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown.
- Cool on baking sheets for just a couple of minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.



Chocolate Chip Bars

This is a variation on the chocolate chip cookies recipe, with additional eggs to build volume and make it spreadable.

Yield: about 10 dozen cookies

4 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking soda
2	tsp	salt
1	lb	oleo, softened to room temperature
1 1/2	cups	granulated sugar
1 1/2	cups	brown sugar (packed)
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
6	each	eggs
4	cups	chocolate chips
2	cup	pecans, coarsely chopped (optional)

- Combine flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl.
- In mixer, blend oleo, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Gradually beat in flour mixture. When the flour is just blended in, remove from mixer.
- Stir in chips and nuts.
- Prepare a half sheet pan with parchment pan liner. Hint: a bit of water on the pan will hold the parchment in place.
- Spread the cookie batter evenly over the pan.
- Bake 20 to 25 minutes. It is done when a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
- Let cool 10 to 15 minutes, then cut into squares, allow to cool a bit longer and transfer to serving tray or plate.



Chocolate Chip Bars

Death by Chocolate Cookies

Rich and chocolatey, with a bit of coffee flavor (if you opt for it).

Yield: 36 cookies

1	cup	brown sugar
1/2	cup	oleo, melted
2	tsp	instant coffee granules, powdered (optional)
1	Tbsp	vanilla
3/4	tsp	baking powder
1/2	tsp	salt
2	each	eggs
2/3	cup	cocoa powder
1 3/4	cups	flour
2	cups	chocolate chips

- Set the oven to 350 F
- In a bowl mix melted oleo, sugar, baking powder, coffee and salt.
- Add the eggs and vanilla; blend until smooth
- Sift together the flour and cocoa, then add to the bowl. Mix together to form a sticky dough, then fold in the chips
- Portion onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper. The portion should be about 1 1/4 or a tad larger, and place an inch apart.
- Bake up to 10 minutes, but check at 8. They are just set; they'll still be shiny on the top at the center.
- Remove from the oven and cool, or serve warm but you better make plenty!

If you want the cookies to be a bit flatter, put on a fresh glove and spray oil on your palm. Flatten each cookie with the palm of your hand.

Death by Chocolate, Chunky Style

Remember the old Chunky bar? This is sort of like that. Awesome.

Yield: 36 cookies

1	cup	brown sugar
1/2	cup	oleo, melted
2	tsp	instant coffee granules, powdered (optional)
1	Tbsp	vanilla
3/4	tsp	baking powder
1/2	tsp	salt
2	each	eggs
2/3	cup	cocoa powder
1 3/4	cup	flour
1	cup	chocolate chips
3/4	cup	peanuts
3/4	cup	raisins, separated so they don't clump in the dough

- Set the oven to 350 F
- In a bowl mix melted oleo, sugar, baking powder, coffee and salt.
- Add the eggs and vanilla; blend until smooth
- Sift together the flour and cocoa, then add to the bowl. Mix together to form a sticky dough.
- Fold in the chips
- Portion onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper. The portion should be about 1 1/4 or a tad larger, and place an inch apart.
- Bake up to 10 minutes, but check at 8. They are just set; they'll still be shiny on the top at the center.
- Remove from the oven and cool, or serve warm but you better make plenty!

Double Chocolate Chip Cookie

Chocolate cookie, chocolate chips. How can that be wrong?

Yield: about 48 cookies

2		cups flour
2/3	cup	cocoa powder
3/4	tsp	baking soda
1/4	tsp	salt
1 1/2	cups	granulated sugar
1	cup	oleo, softened
2	tsp	vanilla extract
2	each	eggs
2	cups	chocolate chips
1	cup	walnuts or pecans, chopped (optional)

- Set oven to 350 F
- In a bowl, sift flour, cocoa powder, soda and salt. Set aside.
- In mixer, cream oleo, sugar and vanilla. Add eggs one at a time until fully incorporated into the batter.
- Add the flour mixture in two additions, blend completely in before putting in the 2nd addition.
- Gently fold chips into the dough at low speed or by hand.
- Portion onto sheet pans in tablespoon size portions.
- Bake about 10 minutes but check at 8.

Fudgy Cake Style Brownies

We don't actually know if "fudgy" is a real word, but these are really good brownies. Word.

Makes a 9 x 13 pan

3/4	cup	cocoa powder
1/4	cup	oil
1/2	cup	oleo, really soft, at room temperature
2	cups	granulated sugar
1	tsp	salt
2	cups	flour (sifted)
1	tsp	baking powder
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
2	cups	chopped nuts (pecans are good and peanuts too)

- Set the oven to 350 F
- Prepare a pan with oil and flour or parchment paper.
- In mixer, combine all ingredients.
- Blend until it just forms a batter
- Bake about 30 minutes, but start checking at 25 minutes.
- Remove, let cool in the pan about 20 minutes before portioning.
- If you want to frost, let the brownies cool completely first.



Ginger snaps

An old-fashioned ginger snap, easy to make and, like almost any cookie dough, you can make ahead and freeze.

Yield: about 3 dozen

1	cup	brown sugar, packed
1	each	egg
1/4	cup	molasses
3/4	cup	vegetable oil
1/4	tsp	salt
2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking soda
1/2	tsp	ground cloves
1 1/2	tsp	cinnamon
2	tsp	ground ginger

- Set oven to 375 F
- In mixer, combine sugar, oil, molasses and egg.
- Add flour and spices and blend together.
- Roll into balls about an inch to 1 1/2 inches in size.
- Sheet out onto pans
- Bake 10 to 12 minutes.

As an option, you can brush each cookie with water and sprinkle sugar lightly on each.



Lemon Drop Cookies

Simple, sweet and tart. This is a great cookie for a warm day.

Yield: about 48 cookies

1	cup	oleo
1/2	cup	powdered sugar
3	Tbsp	grated lemon peel (zest)
2	cups	flour

- Set the oven to 350 F.
- Cream the oleo until light fluffy.
- Add the powdered sugar and lemon zest; blend in.
- Add the flour and blend until combined.
- Scoop onto sheet pan prepared with parchment liner; flatten a bit with the palm of your hand.
- Bake about 14 minutes but check at 11. They should be very lightly brown and set when you touch the top.
- Remove and let cool completely, then roll in powdered sugar



No Bake Peanut Butterscotch Haystacks

This is a no-bake recipe, using just a double boiler. If butterscotch isn't popular, you can swap peanut butter chips or chocolate chips.

Yield: about 24

2 cups butterscotch chips (or peanut butter if you prefer)
1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 cup peanuts (roasted, salted)
4 cups chow mein noodles (no, we're not kidding)

- In a saucepan, set up a double boiler. Melt the chips and peanut butter together. Blend well.
- Gently stir in the peanuts and the chow mein noodles.
- Drop by spoonful onto waxed paper or parchment pan liner.
- Cool until set and then serve.



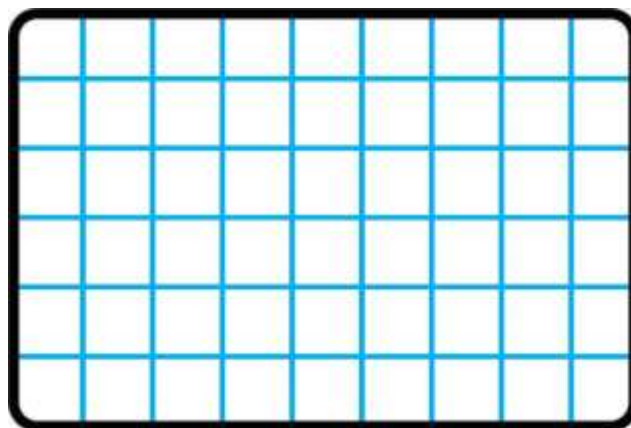
No Bake Baby Ruth Bar

This is a stovetop cookie / confection. Easy and well-received.

Yield: 1 half sheet pan (portion as you see fit)

2 cups peanut butter
2 cups light corn syrup
1 cup brown sugar, packed
1 cup granulated sugar
1 bag chocolate chips
12 cups corn flakes
1 1/2 cups peanuts

- Prep a half sheet pan with parchment paper or food spray.
- Place the corn flakes, chocolate chips and peanuts in a large mixing bowl. Set aside.
- In a saucepan, heat peanut butter, corn syrup and both sugars.
- Stir as it cooks, until it is blended and then remove from heat.
- Pour over the flakes in the bowl, and quickly fold in to blend.
- Transfer to the sheet pan and press it evenly to form a sheet.
- After it has cooled a bit cut into portions.



Oatmeal Cookies

This dough can be prepared ahead and frozen. One simple method is to roll it in parchment paper, then thaw and cut to portions for baking. For variety, add raisins, cranberries, nuts or chocolate chips.

Yield: about 3 dozen

1/2	lb	oleo, softened
1/2	cup	shortening
1	cup	packed brown sugar
1	cup	granulated sugar
2	each	eggs
1 1/2	tsp	vanilla flavor
3	cups	oats, uncooked
1 3/4	cups	flour
1	tsp	baking soda
1	tsp	cinnamon
1/2	tsp	ground cloves
1/2	tsp	salt

- Set oven to 350 F
- In a bowl, sift together the flour, soda, and spices. Set aside.
- In mixer, cream oleo, shortening, sugar and salt until fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time and beat on low until incorporated.
- Add the flour mixture and mix until just blended.
- Add in the oats and blend just barely, and on low speed. Don't overwork the dough.
- Remove bowl from mixer and fold in raisins by hand, gently.
- Portion onto ungreased sheet pan(s).
- Bake 10 to 12 minutes. Don't overbake.
- Remove and let cool.

Oatmeal Coconut Chocolate Chip Chews

Yield: about 5 dozen

1	lb	oleo, softened
2 1/2	cups	brown sugar, packed
1	cup	granulated sugar
3/4	tsp	salt
4	each	eggs
1/4	cup	milk
1 1/2	Tbsp	vanilla flavor
3 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
6	cups	oats, uncooked
4	cups	chocolate chips
2	cups	shredded coconut

- In mixer, cream the sugars and salt with the oleo.
- Add the eggs one at a time and mix until incorporated, then add in the vanilla and milk.
- Combine the baking soda and flour, then add to bowl and blend.
- Fold in the oats, chips and coconut and mix until just blended.
- Portion onto sheet pans with parchment paper (or just ungreased).
- Bake about 12 minutes but check at 10.
- Remove to cool before serving.

Peanut Butter Cookies

Yield: about 4 dozen

1	lb	oleo, softened
2	cups	granulated sugar
3/4	tsp	salt
2	cups	brown sugar, packed (light or dark is fine)
2	cups	peanut butter, creamy
4	each	eggs
5	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1	Tbsp	baking soda

- In mixer, cream oleo, salt and sugar until light and fluffy.
- Add peanut butter, blend well, then add eggs, one at a time. Let each egg incorporate into the mixture before adding the next.
- In separate bowl, mix dry ingredients, then add to the creamed mixture. Mix only until blended together.
- Remove from bowl and put in a container. Refrigerate at least an hour before using.
- Portion out 24 to a large sheet pan or 12 to the half pan by rolling into balls about 1 inch in diameter.
- Press them flat with the palm of your hand, then use a fork to make the traditional cross hatch on each cookie.
- Bake at 350 for about 11 to 14 minutes, or until they begin to brown.



Peanut Butter Cookies - Crunchy

Yield: about 4 dozen

1	lb	oleo, softened
2	cups	granulated sugar
3/4	tsp	salt
2	cups	brown sugar, packed (light or dark is fine)
2	cups	peanut butter, crunchy
4	each	eggs
5	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1	Tbsp	baking soda
1	cup	peanut topping pieces (or finely chopped peanuts)

- In mixer, cream oleo, salt and sugar until light and fluffy.
- Add peanut butter, blend well, then add eggs, one at a time. Let each egg incorporate into the mixture before adding the next.
- In separate bowl, mix dry ingredients, then add to the creamed mixture. Mix only until blended together.
- Remove from bowl and put in a container. Refrigerate at least an hour before using.
- Portion out 24 to a large sheet pan or 12 to the half pan by rolling into balls about 1 inch in diameter.
- Press them flat with the palm of your hand, then use a fork to make the traditional cross hatch on each cookie.
- Bake at 350 for about 11 to 14 minutes, or until they begin to brown.

Pecan Shortbread Cookies

Almost identical to Mexican Wedding Cookies, these shortbread cookies are super easy to make and use only a few ingredients. In this formula, we flatten them a bit so they're more cookie-like, and less like a ball. Doesn't freeze well, but you can refrigerate up to 5 days.

Yield: 48 cookies

1/2	lb	softened butter (you can use oleo here)
1	tsp	vanilla flavor
1/2	cup	powdered sugar (plus more for dusting)
2	cups	flour
1	cup	pecans, finely chopped (this is important)

- In mixer, blend sugar, vanilla and butter until light and fluffy.
- Add flour gradually in 2 additions, and mix slowly until it is completely incorporated.
- Add the pecans and fold gently and just for a moment. Don't overwork the dough.

Working the Dough (diagram follows this page)

- Remove from the mixer and divide into 4 pieces. Roll each one into a log about an inch in diameter.
- Cut each log into 12 pieces.
- Pan out, keep them separated. Using the palm of your hand, flatten each cookie somewhat so it has a curved "crown" top.
- Bake at 350 F about 13 minutes. The bottom should be very lightly brown. In fact, they may look underdone. That's okay.
- Let them cool completely, then roll in powdered sugar before serving.

1. Roll into strings & cut into 1" pieces



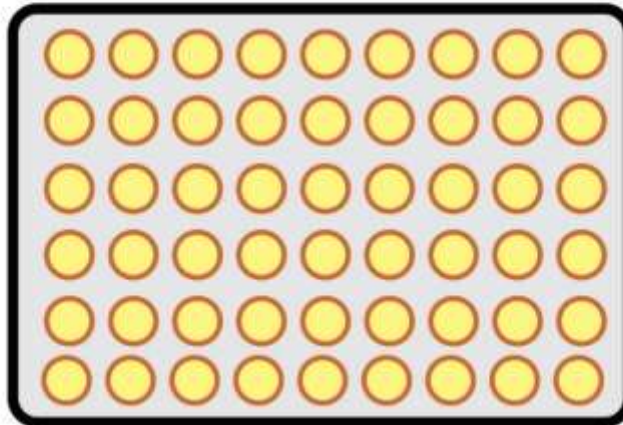
2. Stand pieces on end.



3. Flatten each piece with palm of hand



4. Pan out cookies on sheet pan.



Pumpkin Spice Cookies (2 Ingredients!)

Yes, that's right. Only 2 ingredients. Hard to believe but true.

Yield: about 24 cookies

- 1 box spice cake mix (standard 18 oz.)
- 1 can solid pack pumpkin (15 oz can)

- Set the oven to 350 F.
- Mix the two ingredients together.
- Spoon out onto sheet pans prepared with parchment liner or well-greased.
- Bake about 20 minutes but check at 17 minutes.
- Allow cookies to cool enough to stabilize before transferring to a rack. If cooling on the sheet pan, let cool completely.



Shortbread Cookies

You really can't get more basic than this cookie. And we don't say this very often here, but you must use butter to appreciate this formula.

Yield: about 24 cookies

1	lb	butter
3 1/2	lbs	flour
1	cup	brown sugar, packed
1/4	tsp	salt

- Set oven to 325 F
- Cream butter, sugar and salt.
- Add flour and blend until the dough just comes together
- Turn out onto a floured work surface and knead the dough by hand for about 5 minutes. You want a smooth, soft dough.
- Roll out to 3/8-inch thickness. Cut into the shape you desire.
- Prick the top with a fork, as shown below.
- Bake between 20 and 25 minutes. They should be very light when you remove them from the oven.



Snickerdoodles

Yield: about 6 dozen

2 3/4	cups	flour
2	tsp	cream of tartar
1	tsp	baking soda
1	cup	vegetable shortening
1 1/2	cups	granulated sugar
1/2	tsp	salt
2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
2	each	eggs
1 1/2	Tbsp	ground cinnamon
1/4	cup	granulated sugar

- Preheat oven to 400°F.
- Mix flour, cream of tartar, and baking soda in a bowl. Set aside.
- In mixer, beat sugar, shortening and salt until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, milk and vanilla; mix well.
- Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed.
- Mix remaining 1/4 cup sugar and cinnamon.
- Shape dough into 1-inch balls, then roll in cinnamon sugar.
- Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.
- Bake 7 to 8 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets and then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.



Rocky Road Bar Cookies

Shortbread, chocolate and nuts. Need we say more?

Yield: 48 bars (one half sheet pan)

Cookie Dough

1	lb	butter
1	tsp	salt
1 1/2	cup	sugar
4	tsp	vanilla flavor
5	cups	flour

Topping

2	bags	chocolate chips
1 1/2	cups	heavy cream
2	cups	pecans, coarsely chopped and toasted
1	bag	mini marshmallows

-
- Make the cookie crust
- Set the oven to 300 F
- In bowl, combine butter, salt, sugar and vanilla.
- Add the flour and blend until it comes together. It will seem dry at first, but the butter will pull it together during mixing.
- Line the pan with parchment or spray with oil.
- Press the cookie dough into the pan and spread evenly, then dock with a fork to prevent steam bubbles from forming.
- Bake up to 40 minutes, but check at about 30, depending on your oven. It should be lightly brown at the edges and barely on top.
- Remove from oven, turn out of the pan (if you used parchment, you can just grab the paper and slide the cookie out carefully).
- Set aside to cool.

Make the topping

- In a saucepan, heat the chocolate and cream on low(ish) heat, stirring as it heats.
- When the cream begins to steam, remove from heat and stir the chocolate until it absorbs all the cream and is smooth.
- Pour most of the chocolate “ganache” over the cookie dough, spreading it evenly to coat the entire top generously.
- Put the marshmallows and pecans on top of the chocolate.
- Drizzle the remaining chocolate over the top of the cookies. If it doesn’t flow, reheat gently for a moment. You don’t want to melt the marshmallows so don’t get it too hot.
- Chill in the cooler for about half an hour, then portion into pieces with a very sharp knife.

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Sugar Cookies

This is a “roll out” dough. Make, chill a while, then roll, cut and bake. You can top with granulated sugar before baking, or make a thin icing.

Yield: about 5 dozen

5	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking powder
1	tsp	salt
1 1/2	cups	oleo, softened
2	cups	granulated sugar
1	tsp	vanilla flavor
4	each	eggs

- In a bowl, sift together flour, salt and baking powder. Set aside.
- In mixer, cream sugar, oleo, and vanilla flavor until fluffy.
- Add flour mixture and mix until blended.
- Cover and chill the dough at least an hour (or overnight).
- On a clean surface, roll the dough a bit thicker than 1/4 inch.
- Cut shapes you want, transfer to a pan lined with parchment.
- Bake at 350 F about 9 minutes, but check at 6 for doneness.

ICING (this formula hardens to a shiny icing)

1	cup	powdered sugar
2	tsp	milk
2	tsp	corn syrup (light)
1/4	tsp	vanilla or other extract

- SIFT the powdered sugar. Combine all ingredients; blend well.
- Add coloring if desired. Apply to cookies by dipping or brushing.

White Chocolate Cranberry Cookies

Yield: about 10 dozen cookies

4 1/2 cups flour
2 tsp baking soda
2 tsp salt
1 lb oleo, softened to room temperature
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
1 1/2 cups brown sugar (packed)
2 tsp vanilla flavoring
4 each eggs
4 cups white chocolate chips
2 cups cranberries

- COMBINE flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl.
- In mixer, blend oleo, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Gradually beat in flour mixture, then remove from mixer.
- Stir in chips and cranberries.
- Portion onto sheet pans lined with parchment paper.
- BAKE for 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown.
- Cool on baking sheets a few minutes, then transfer to wire rack.



Filings, Frostings & Icing

Cheese Danish Filling

You can use this filling and puff pastry squares to make an unbelievably good Danish pastry. Topped with a bit of “string” icing and it will look like you’re a Master Baker.

Yield: filling for 24 pastries

3	8 oz	cream cheese (3 small packs)
3	each	egg yolks (save the white for an egg wash)
1 1/2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
1	lb	powdered sugar

- In mixer, beat the cream cheese until it is soft.
- Add the egg yolks and vanilla to cream cheese and beat in.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on low to medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- Don’t mix at a high speed. You want a somewhat “dense” mixture.
- You can immediately transfer it to a pastry bag, a container, or another easy way to use the product is to use a Ziploc bag. Photos from the Ziploc website on the next page show how:



Open the bag and put in a cup or something that will keep it open while you put in the filling.



Squeeze out the air, close the bag and cut the tip from a corner. You now have a pastry bag. 😊



Use as you would any other pastry bag. When you are finished, you can refrigerate the unused product. When the bag is empty, just throw it away.



Chocolate Cream Pie Filling

You can use chocolate pudding mix, or you can do the real deal here.

Yield: 1 each pie, 9 inch

1	cup	sugar, granulated
10	Tbsp	cornstarch
1/2	tsp	salt
6	Tbsp	cocoa powder
2	Tbsp	vegetable oil
1	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring
5	cups	milk
4	each	egg yolks, lightly beaten

- In a saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch, cocoa powder, and salt.
- Combine the milk, eggs, oil and vanilla, then add to saucepan.
- Bring to a boil for one minute, beating vigorously with a wire whip.
- Remove from the heat and continue blending until smooth.
- Transfer to a container and chill 2 to 3 hours. Use as a filling for pies, eclairs, cupcakes.

Cinnamon Sugar Cream Cheese Filling

You can use this to fill cupcakes, Danish pastry, or whatever your creative mind conjures up.

Yield: about 3 cups

1	lb	cream cheese
1 1/2	cup	powdered sugar
1	tsp	ground cinnamon
1/2	cup	milk
1	tsp	vanilla flavor

- In mixer, beat all ingredients together until light.
- Remove and use.
- Sorry it isn't more complicated!

Below, you can see that it is simply injected into a cupcake. You can use a standard piping tip in a pastry bag to fill cupcakes. Or, you can use it between layers of a cake.



Photo: Wilton.com

Pecan Pie Filling

Yield: filling for a 9-inch pie

3	each	eggs, beaten
1	cup	corn syrup (dark or light)
1	cup	granulated sugar
2	Tbsp	oleo, melted
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring
1 1/2	cups	pecans, chopped

- Set the oven to 350 F
- Blend all ingredients together.
- Pour into a pie crust.
- Bake about an hour to 1 1/4 hours, but check at about 45 minutes. If the crust is getting too dark, you can wrap it with foil to prevent it over cooking.
- The pie is done when the center is nearly set. It will jiggle just a bit but not much.
- Remove and allow to cool completely before cutting. Pecan pie, if cut immediately, will pool on the plate. Not a great look for pie.



Pumpkin Pie Filling

Yield: filling for a 9-inch pie

2	cups	solid pack pumpkin (a 15 oz can is fine)
1 3/4	cups	evaporated milk
2	each	eggs
1	tsp	cinnamon
1/2	tsp	ground ginger
1/2	tsp	ground nutmeg
1/2	tsp	salt

- Set the oven to 340 F
- Have a prepared pie crust in the shell, ready to be filled.
- Blend all ingredients together and pour into the pie crust.
- Bake about an hour to 1 1/4 hours, but check at about 45 minutes. If the crust is getting too dark, you can wrap it with foil to prevent it over cooking.
- The pie is done when the center is nearly set. It will jiggle just a bit but not much.
- Remove and allow to cool completely before cutting.



Vanilla Cream Pie Filling

Yield: 1 each pie, 9 inch

1/2	cup	sugar, granulated
8	Tbsp	cornstarch
1/2	tsp	salt
5	cups	milk
4	each	egg yolks, lightly beaten
1 1/2	Tbsp	butter, softened
1	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring

- In a saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch, and salt.
- Blend the milk and eggs together, then add to saucepan.
- Bring to a boil for one minute, beating vigorously with a wire whip.
- Add butter and vanilla while still working with wire whip.
- Remove from the heat and continue blending until smooth.
- Transfer to a container and chill 2 to 3 hours. Use as a filling for pies, eclairs, cupcakes.

Variation: Banana Cream Pie Filling

Make as above, but before cooling fold in 2 cups of sliced bananas.

Variation: Coconut Cream Pie Filling

Make as above, but before cooling fold in 1 cup of flaked coconut.

Buttercream Frosting

This is the baker's standard for icing formulas. It is a pure white, light and fluffy, and is stable at room temp. You can add different flavorings, as simple as vanilla to a complex orange cream cheese or anything you can think of. It's also the base for chocolate icing.

Yield: about 2 cups

1	cup	vegetable shortening
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
2	Tbsp	water

- In mixer, cream the shortening and vanilla until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- After all sugar has been mixed in, add water. Mix at medium-to-high speed and mix to whip in some air and absorb the water.
- If not using immediately, put in an airtight container and store at room temperature up to 5 days.

Brown Sugar Cream Cheese Frosting

1 lb cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup oleo, softened
1/4 cup brown sugar, packed
1 Tbsp vanilla flavoring
7 cups powdered sugar

- In mixer, beat cream cheese, oleo and brown sugar until fluffy.
- Add vanilla, beat in, then add powdered sugar, a cup at a time at low speed until blended in.
- Turn mixer to high speed; blend a minute or two to work in some air and make it light and fluffy.
- Use immediately. If not using right away, store in cooler up to 3 days. To use, put in mixer and blend on high to soften.

Caramel Buttercream Frosting

Your basic buttercream frosting with caramel ice cream topping. Yes, that's really all it is. Make a simple, festive cake with this frosting and a sprinkling of chocolate chips and chopped nuts.

Yield: about 2 1/2 to 3 cups

1/2	cup	vegetable shortening
1/2	cup	oleo, softened
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
3/4	cup	caramel ice cream topping

- In mixer, cream the shortening until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- After all sugar has been mixed in, add the topping and mix at medium speed.
- If not using immediately, put in an airtight container and store at room temperature up to 5 days.



Chocolate Buttercream Frosting

This is the buttercream, with cocoa powder and a bit more water because the cocoa powder is, of course, quite dry. You can make as dark as you like by adding more cocoa, but adjust fat upward.

Yield: about 2 1/2 to 3 cups

1/2	cup	vegetable shortening
1/2	cup	oleo, softened
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
1	cup	cocoa powder
1	tsp	vanilla
4	Tbsp	water

- In mixer, cream the shortening and vanilla until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- After all sugar has been mixed in, add the cocoa powder and mix at low speed until blended (or you'll create a brown dust cloud).
- Once it's worked in, add water. Mix at medium-to-high speed and mix to whip in some air and absorb the water.
- If not using immediately, put in an airtight container and store at room temperature up to 5 days.

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Cream Cheese Frosting

Use this for carrot cake, spice cake, topping coffee cakes, cinnamon rolls – the list might be endless. And again, it's basically buttercream.

Yield: about 3 cups

1/2	cup	oleo, softened
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8 oz cream cheese, softened
4 cups powdered sugar, sifted
1 Tbsp milk

- Cream the oleo and cream cheese together.
- Add the sugar, a cup at a time until all is blended. Scrape the bowl sides and bottom between additions.
- Add the milk and mix on medium speed until it is blended in.
- Remove and use.

OPTION: you can add finely chopped pecans to this frosting.



German Chocolate Frosting

“German” chocolate was created by Sam German back in 1852. He was developing a product for the Baker’s Chocolate Company, who named their Baker’s German Sweet Chocolate for him.

This product is easier to work when chilled, but you can work it at room temperature.

Yield: enough for a 2-layer, 9-inch cake

1	cup	brown sugar
1	cup	evaporated milk
3	each	egg yolks
1/2	cup	butter
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring
1	cup	pecans, chopped fairly fine (but not minced)
1 1/2	cups	flaked coconut

- In a saucepan, combine egg yolks, milk, brown sugar, butter, and vanilla.
- Cook over a low to medium-low heat, stirring CONSTANTLY until the mixture thickens.
- When it is bubbling and thick, add pecans and coconut. Cook another minute or so, then remove from heat.
- To cool, spread onto a baking or sheet pan and put in the cooler.
- When ready to use, you can scrape up with a spatula and put in a container.
- This will keep for several days but no more than 5 days due to the egg yolks present in the product.

Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

A brighter tasting version of the cream cheese frosting. You can use these interchangeably.

Yield: about 3 cups

1/2	cup	oleo, softened
8	oz	cream cheese, softened
4	cups	powdered sugar, sifted
2	Tbsp	lemon juice
1	Tbsp	grated lemon peel (just the zest, the outer yellow)

- Cream the oleo and cream cheese together.
- Add the sugar, a cup at a time until all is blended. Scrape the bowl sides and bottom between additions.
- Add the lemon juice and zest; mix on medium speed until it is blended in.
- Remove and use.

BY THE WAY: You can use orange juice and zest in place of the lemon for a similar result but a distinctly different flavor.

Lemony Buttercream Frosting

This is a basic lemon frosting, and you can use it on not just cakes but a frosted cookie, Danish, jelly rolls and anything where you want a hit of bright lemon flavor. It takes a bit of the edge off the sweetness.

Yield: about 2 cups

1/2	cup	vegetable shortening
1/2	cup	oleo, softened (this will add some yellow color)
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
2	Tbsp	lemon juice
1	Tbsp	grated lemon peel (just the zest, the outer yellow)

- In mixer, cream the shortening until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- After all sugar has been mixed in, add lemon juice and zest. Mix at medium-to-high speed and mix to whip in some air.



Mocha Buttercream Frosting

A chocolatey-coffee flavored frosting. Rich and another winner on a chocolate cake. You'll need to melt chocolate chips to make this.

Yield: about 3 cups

1/4	cup	melted chocolate chips (let cool just a bit)
1/2	cup	shortening
1/2	cup	oleo, softened
1	Tbsp	instant coffee granules
1	tsp	vanilla
2	Tbsp	milk
4	cups	powdered sugar

- In a cup, combine the coffee, vanilla and milk to dissolve the instant coffee granules. Set aside for now.
- In mixer, cream the shortening and oleo until light and fluffy.
- Add the milk / coffee mixture and beat in well.
- Now add sugar, a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- Add more milk as needed to create a workable texture to your preference.
- Use this right away, or store in cooler up to 72 hours. Before using, don't let it come up to room temp. Instead, put it in the mixer and beat at high speed. This will make it workable.

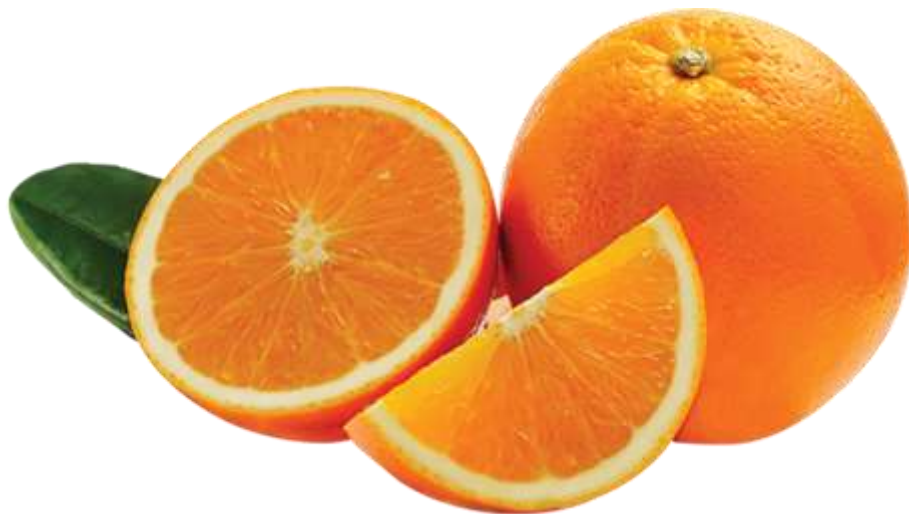
Orange Buttercream Frosting

This is a basic orange frosting, and like the lemon, you can use it on not just cakes but also on cookies, Danish, jelly rolls and more.

Yield: about 2 cups

1	cup	vegetable shortening
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
3	Tbsp	orange juice
2	Tbsp	grated orange peel (just the zest, the outer skin)

- In mixer, cream the shortening until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- After all sugar has been mixed in, add orange juice and zest. Mix at medium-to-high speed and mix to whip in some air.



Peanut Buttercream Frosting

This one is really good with chocolate cake. The peanut butter has a good bit of fat and working with it can be a bit different than regular buttercream and uses more liquid.

Yield: about 3 cups

2/3	cup	vegetable shortening
1/3	cup	peanut butter (creamy)
4	cups	SIFTED powdered sugar (that's about a pound)
1	tsp	vanilla flavoring
4 to 6	Tbsp	milk

- Cream together shortening and peanut butter until light and fluffy.
- Add the sugar a cup at a time on medium speed. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl periodically as you mix.
- Add the vanilla and about half of the milk, blend on medium to high speed to work it in and build volume by adding air to the mix.
- Add more milk as needed to create a texture to your preference.
- Use this right away, or store in cooler up to 72 hours. Before using, don't let it come up to room temp. Instead, put it in the mixer and beat at high speed. This will make it workable.

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Basic Pastry Icing

This versatile icing is good for almost anything you want to top with a bit of sugary coating. Danish, hand pies, streusel, cinnamon rolls and more. You can make thin or thicker by adjusting the amount of milk.

Yield: 1 cup

2 cups powdered sugar
2 Tbsp oleo, softened
1 tsp vanilla flavoring
1 Tbsp milk

- Combine all ingredients and blend until smooth.

Orange Pastry Icing

This is similar to the above recipe, but with orange juice or extract.

Yield: 1 cup

2 cups powdered sugar
2 Tbsp oleo, softened
1/2 tsp vanilla flavoring
2 Tbsp orange juice

- Combine all ingredients and blend until smooth.

Glazed Donut Icing

This is the kind you get at a donut shop. As it cools, it hardens. If the glaze is too thick after being heated, thin with water.

1 lb powdered sugar, SIFTED
1/2 cup milk

Pinch salt
1 tsp vanilla

- Make a double boiler with a large bowl set up on a saucepan and let come up to temp (it doesn't need to boil; it's being used as a warmer for the prepared icing).
- Meanwhile, heat milk, salt and vanilla in a saucepan. Add the powdered sugar and blend until smooth.
- At this point if the icing is hot, it should be thin enough to easily coat donuts. If not, thin with hot water. Pour into double boiler.
- See the drawing on the next page for using the glaze.

Glazed Chocolate Donut Icing

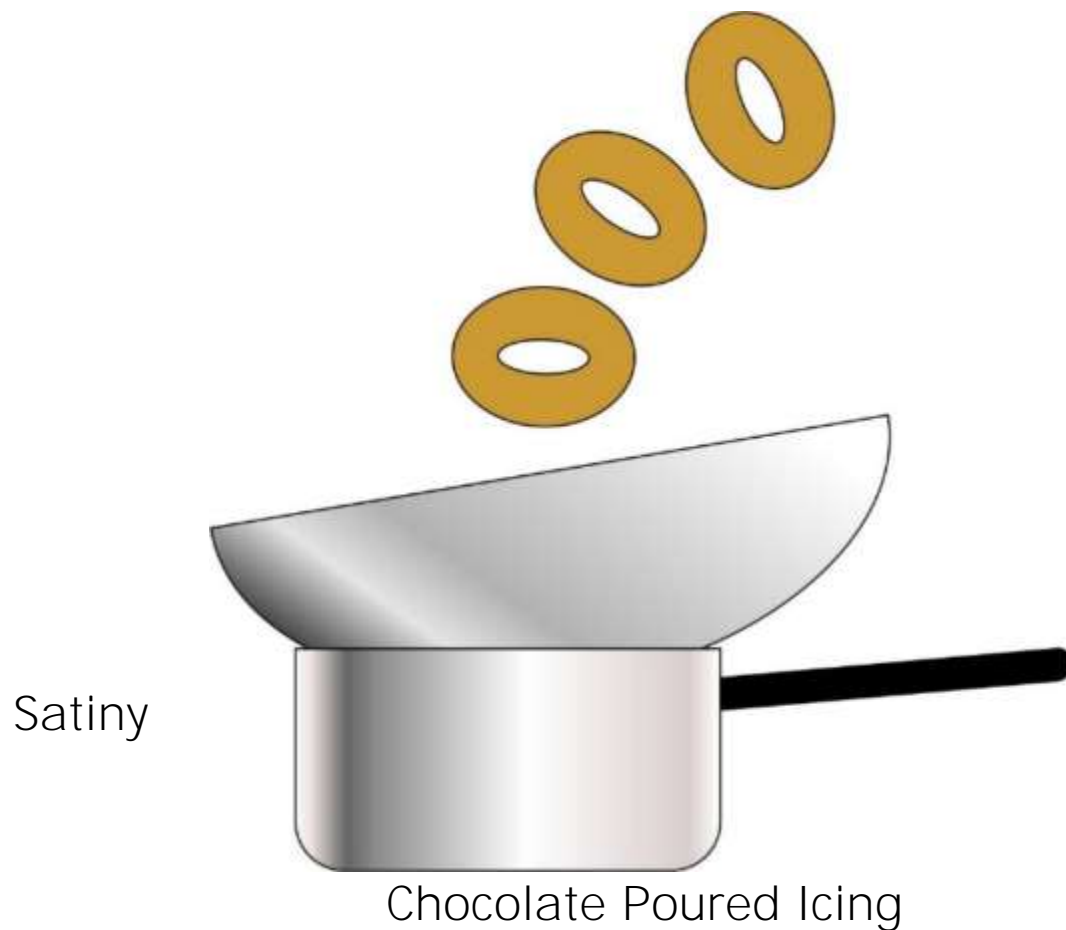
1 lb powdered sugar, SIFTED
1 cup cocoa powder
1/2 cup milk
Pinch salt
1 tsp vanilla
1 Tbsp corn syrup (light or dark)

- Follow the steps in the previous recipe for Glazed Donut Icing.
- Use as you would the vanilla glaze

Time to Glaze the Donuts

- Set the bowl at a slight angle to make working easier.
- Dip each donut in the glaze; flip, and remove. A skewer, a wood spoon or the handle of a spatula are good tools for this.
- Cool the donuts on a wire rack.

- Discard the remaining glaze, or work it into a baked product like a quick bread as the sugar, rather than having to throw it away.



This is for the Ultimate Chocolate Pound Cake, but you can use it on probably anything you like. Perhaps a Boston Cream Pie?

Yield: about 2 cups

1 1/2 cups chocolate chips

3 Tbsp butter

1 Tbsp corn syrup (either light or dark is okay)

1/2 tsp vanilla flavoring

- Set up a double boiler with a bowl on top.
- Bring to temperature below boiling but hot.
- Combine everything but the vanilla, cook until the chocolate is melted, stirring frequently.
- Add vanilla, stir in and remove from the heat.
- Use immediately by pouring over your cake (or whatever)



Pie Crust,
Pâte à Choux
& Other Pastry

Cream Puff, (Pâte à Choux)

Created in the 16th century this is a simple, stovetop puff pastry. Use it to make puff shells for any number of uses: custard fillings or whipped cream for puffs or eclairs. It also is the base for crullers, chouquettes, and even churros. The dough expands due to the amount of steam produced during cooking.

Yield: about 3 dozen (using a #60 scoop), or 24 eclairs

2	cups	water
1 1/8	cups	shortening (not oleo or butter)
2	cups	flour (plus a Tablespoon)
Pinch		salt
9	each	eggs

- Set the oven to 400 F and set the mixer up with a mixing paddle.
- In a saucepan, combine water, shortening, and salt. When it comes to a boil, add flour stirring rapidly until the mixture forms a ball.
- /Put dough in mixer, then add eggs - one at a time - until each one is incorporated. The result will be a smooth, elastic, sticky dough.
- Bag out onto a pan lined with parchment (photo next page).
- Immediately bake until they are nice and golden brown.
- Remove and let cool
- To fill, split carefully and fill, or use a pastry bag with a large piping tip to fill.



Pie Dough

We'll spend some time with this because a) it is a fundamental skill we all need to possess, and b) it is easy to make but equally easy to make a poor-quality product if you don't follow certain guidelines.

A pie crust is flaky because, during baking, the fat melts out and leaves pockets. The small amount of water steams and expands these pockets, and fat also helps to crisp the product. That's about it. If there's too much water, you've got soggy pie crust.

Some do's and don'ts when making pie dough:

DO

- Work with cold ingredients. Cold water, cold butter.
- Use as little water as possible when making pie dough.
- Chill completely before shaping into crust.
- Work the dough as little as possible

DON'T

- Overwork the dough.
- Overwork the dough.
- Overwork the dough.
- Add exotic ingredients (that special "mayo" pie crust? Nah).
- Forget to chill your ingredients.
- Use too much liquid. That will cause the gluten to toughen, and make your pie crust chewy.
- Did we mention not overworking the dough?

Before we begin, a visual tutorial on making a pie dough begins on the next page.



1 Blend shortening into flour until the mixture is evenly crumbly.



2 Cut butter or oleo into chunks, then work in to make an unevenly crumbled mixture. This will help to create some texture in the crust.



3 Stir in most - but not all - of the ICE COLD water. Blend with a fork until it just starts to pull together. Once it does, stop mixing.



4 Put in parchment, wax paper, or PVC film and if lots of small particles fall off, spray /sprinkle with a very small amount of water and press



5 Using the wrapping, press the dough into a disc, or log (depending on amount) and work it until it binds and is mostly smooth in shape. Chill for at least an hour before dividing or shaping into crusts.



6 Divide the dough into pieces to shape into crusts. Bottoms are larger than top, so you should size the pieces accordingly. You can freeze at any point in the process

Photos: King Arthur Flour Co.

For 2 each Double Crust pies:

5	cups	flour
2	tsp	salt
1/2	cup	shortening
3/4	cup	butter or oleo, very cold
1	cup	ice water

- Cut butter or oleo into cubes (1/2 inch or less), chill very cold
- Combine the flour and salt
- Add the vegetable shortening and blend (shown) until crumbly.
- Cut in the butter/oleo until you have a mixture that is crumbled but unevenly so (as shown).
- Sprinkle half the water over the mixture, while working in with a fork or spoon.
- Continue to add water – in small amounts – until the dough pulls together into a solid mass. It should hold together if picked up.
- Roll into a log and press together until it is a smooth, even log with no voids in the middle. Chill for at least an hour.
- Remove, cut into 4 pieces: 2 slightly larger for the bottom and the other two for the top crust. You should have 4 discs ready to work. Keep all of them cold except the one you're rolling out.
- Roll the bottoms into a circular shape about 1/8-inch-thick, and big enough to cover the bottom and sides of the pan. To figure out how big that is, take the size of your pie pan and add 4 inches (unless it's a deep-dish pan). You'll have enough to completely cover the bottom and go up the sides about 2 1/2 inches.

Some general measurements:

- 8-inch pie tin – roll the dough about 12 inches in diameter
- 9-inch pie tin – roll the dough about 13 inches in diameter
- 9-inch deep dish – roll the dough about 14 inches in diameter

- An easy way to pick up the crust is to lightly flour it, then roll it up on your rolling pin (as shown below), then just roll it over the pie tin. It will lay across the top and you can then fit it to the pan.



- Fill the pie with the filling (this is usually fruit for a double crust), being careful not to get filling around the edges, which will prevent a good seal from forming on the edges, and cause leaking.
- Roll out the top crust and, before putting it on, dampen the edge of the bottom crust.
- Now roll out the top crust and press the two crusts together to seal. There are any number of decorative ways to dress up the edge of a pie and we'll cover that shortly.
- Trim the edge of the pie crust easily by pressing the palm of your hand or a bench knife against the side of the pie tin. Work your way around the pan. The crust will simply fall off.
- Now dress the edge with a fork with a design of your preference. (see next page for some ideas).
- Brush lightly with water and sprinkle with granulated sugar.



Biscuits,
Quick Breads,
& Other Things You
Really Ought to Know

Biscuits 101

Down here in the south, we take our biscuits seriously. Go to Milwaukee, order a biscuit and they'll look at you like you have two heads. Here, biscuits have a deep and rich tradition. To win the respect and admiration of our customers, a great biscuit is a must. 😊

Fortunately, we have a couple of great formulas for you. Follow them; learn the tricks, and add this to your personal skills tool box.

So, what is the secret to a great biscuit? How do you make it light, fluffy, tender, moist and flavorful? And how do you do it consistently?

It helps to think of a biscuit like you would a pie crust:

- The formula has to be balanced.
- Don't overwork the dough.
- You don't need – or want – a bunch of fancy “tricks”
- Don't overwork the dough.
- The oven temp needs to be just right.
- Did we mention not to overwork the dough?
-
- Let's look at each one of these factors one at a time.

THE FORMULA

Baker's recipes are generally called formulas because you have less wiggle room in the ingredients. Unlike making a gumbo, where you can toss in some extra onion, you can't just bump up the baking powder without some really noticeable results!

Fat to Flour Ratio: affects both density and rising properties of a biscuit. In general, the more fat, the less the biscuit will rise. Like a cookie, too much fat will give you a less stable product. *A 4:1 ratio seems is about right.*

Flour to Liquid Ratio: the more liquid, the stickier the dough and the less it will rise (and the more it will spread). Drop biscuits have more liquid in them by far, but they usually compensate for this by either adding leavening, or baking in a cupcake / muffin tin. This forces the biscuit to rise rather than spread. *The best ratio? It is a range somewhere between 4 cups flour to 1 1/2 cups, up to 2 cups liquid.*

Type of Fat: Shortening? Butter or Margarine? Shortening will produce a tender, moist biscuit, and it can help the product rise higher. Butter or margarine tend to also produce a flakier and more flavorful biscuit, and improve browning during baking.

The role butter and oleo play is not just to act as a shortening, but also to add water. This water steams during baking and creates pockets that expand and give a lightness to the product.

But what about taste and texture overall? Some science in testing goes a long way. And the fact is this: *80% of people who participated in taste tests preferred the biscuit made margarine!*

Milk, Buttermilk, H₂O: You want milk or buttermilk. Although you can use water, the result isn't great. The protein in milk acts as a softening agent, and helps strengthen the structure of baked goods without making them tough. Buttermilk adds a bit of flavor that milk won't, and if using it, you need to adjust for it by adding some baking soda.

Leavening: for biscuits, that's a chemical leavening, not yeast. Baking powder or soda are what we refer to here. They do the same thing but differently. 2 things to remember:

- when using buttermilk, reduce the baking powder a bit and replace it with baking soda, to counteract the acidity of buttermilk.
- Too much of either will produce bitter tasting product and may actually REDUCE the volume during baking.

Baking Temperature: Opinions vary, but our experience is that, the hotter the oven, the more “pop” in your biscuits. 450 is about right.

Overworking: The dough, that is. Think of how you work bread; the more you knead it, the better the structure and the more the gluten (flour protein) develops. Great for bread, lousy for biscuits.

Key here is to mix the wet and dry ingredients just enough to make a workable dough, then give it a couple of folds, and cut. You’ll have a more tender product that looks and tastes great.

Touching or Not? Put them on a sheet pan with space between them for a well-defined round biscuit that is brown on the sides. For an old-school look and taste, put them in a pan touching. As they rise, they’ll puff into each other. They’ll be a bit ugly, but a bit moister.

Drop Biscuits: no kneading here. Mix a wet dough with extra buttermilk or milk, and scoop onto a sheet pan or into a muffin tin. A muffin tin, as previously mentioned, will result in a taller biscuit.



Buttermilk Biscuits

This is a simple biscuit. Pay attention to the basics and it will turn out an excellent product – far superior to anything out of a bag or can.

Yield: about 24 biscuits using a standard cutter (2 3/4-inch diameter)

6	cups	flour
2	Tbsp	baking powder
1	Tbsp	salt
1	tsp	baking soda
1	cup	margarine, cubed into 1/2-inch pieces
2 1/3	cups	buttermilk

- Set the oven to 450
- In a large bowl, sift together the dry ingredients.
- Cut in the oleo until you have a crumbly mixture.
- Add in the buttermilk and gently fold mixture together. It should be sticky.
- Turn out of the bowl onto a heavily floured work surface. Dust the top of the dough with flour.
- Pat down and fold each side to the center (3-fold roll). Turn the dough and repeat. It should now just be workable but if not, do a 3-fold roll once more.
- Pat or roll out the dough (make sure the table is still floured) about an inch thick. Let it rest a few minutes before cutting (this prevents the biscuits from pulling back into the shape of an egg).
- Cut the biscuits and pan out.
- Rework the remaining dough, cut another round of biscuits and pan. Use the remaining dough in a bread dough.
- Brush the top of the biscuits with butter, then bake until golden brown, light and fluffy.
- Step back and take a bow. You made some awesome biscuits.

Buttermilk Cheddar Biscuits

This is the same dough as the previous recipe, but with cheddar.

Yield: about 24 biscuits using a standard cutter (2 3/4-inch diameter)

6	cups	flour
2	Tbsp	baking powder
1	Tbsp	salt
1	tsp	garlic powder (optional)
1	tsp	baking soda
1	cup	margarine, cubed into 1/2-inch pieces
2 1/3	cups	buttermilk
2	cups	shredded cheddar (or cubed in very small chunks)

- Set the oven to 450
- In a large bowl, sift together the dry ingredients.
- Cut in the oleo until you have a crumbly mixture.
- Add buttermilk and gently fold together. It should be sticky.
- Add the cheddar and fold in gently, just until distributed.
- Turn out of the bowl onto a heavily floured work surface. Dust the top of the dough with flour.
- Pat down and fold each side to the center (3-fold roll). Turn the dough and repeat. It should now just be workable but if not, do a 3-fold roll once more.
- Pat or roll out the dough (make sure the table is still floured) about an inch thick. Let it rest a few minutes before cutting (this prevents the biscuits from pulling back into the shape of an egg).
- Cut the biscuits and pan out.
- Rework the remaining dough, cut another round of biscuits and pan. Use the remaining dough in a bread dough.
- Brush the top of the biscuits with butter, then bake until golden brown, light and fluffy.

Variations:

Parmesan Biscuits: Swap out shredded Parmesan for the cheddar, or use half of each.

Herbed Biscuits: Add 2 or 3 tablespoons dried parsley, up the garlic and a pinch of poultry seasoning.

Drop Biscuits: Increase the liquid by about a cup, and if it is buttermilk, add 1/4 tsp of baking soda.

Spoon or scoop onto sheet pans or into muffin tins.

Don't make too loose or they will spread if you put on a sheet pan.



Cat Head Biscuits?

You may have had a grandma who made these in an old black skillet. Big ol' biscuits. About the size of a cat's head if we recall correctly. And there's your sign: cat head biscuits.

Yield: 24 each

4	cups	buttermilk (if you make it, you have an infinite supply)
6	Tbsp	baking powder
1	Tbsp	salt
3/4	cup	shortening, cubed into small pieces
3/4	cup	oleo, cubed into small pieces and slightly softened
7 to 8	cups	flour

- Set the oven to 400 F
- In a bowl, mix buttermilk, baking powder, salt and sugar.
- Add the shortening and oleo.
- Add half the flour and stir in with a slotted spoon, breaking up the fat as you do so it's smaller, with irregular pieces in it.
- Add as much remaining flour and work in until you have a workable, but sticky dough.
- Turn out onto a floured work surface and 3-fold roll twice, or until the dough is not sticky.
- Pat out into a square and cut into 24 pieces.
- Coat each piece lightly with flour; roll each piece into a ball, then flatten and place, side by side, in a skillet or 9 x 13 pans.
- Bake about 25 minutes, up to 30. Check earlier for doneness.
- Remove and brush with butter.



Banana Bread

This is a staple for offshore and uses those over-ripe bananas.

Yield: 2 loaf pans

2 1/4	cups	granulated sugar
1 1/2	tsp	salt
1 1/2	cups	oleo, softened
6	each	eggs
6	cups	bananas, mashed
1 1/2	tsp	vanilla flavoring
4 1/2	cups	flour
2	tsp	baking soda
1	tsp	ground cinnamon
1/4	tsp	nutmeg (optional but good)

- Set the oven to 350 F. Prep the loaf pans with oil and flour.
- In a bowl, combine flour, spices and baking soda. Set aside.
- In mixer, cream sugar, salt and oleo at medium speed.
- Add eggs, mix about a minute, scrape the bowl and mix 1 minute.
- Add bananas and vanilla; blend at low speed until incorporated.
- Add flour mixture and beat at low speed until blended.
- Transfer to loaf pans, bake about an hour but check for doneness at 50 minutes. It could take up to 1 1/4 hours to finish baking.
- Remove, cool 10 minutes and turn out of the pan.
- Cool longer before slicing to serve.

Banana Nut Bread

- Follow the procedure for Banana Bread, but add 2 cups pecans or walnuts after adding and beating in the flour mixture.
- Fold the nuts into the batter by hand.
- Transfer to the prepared loaf pans
- Bake as directed in Banana Bread formula.



Basic Quick Bread (with Variations)

This basic batter can make any variety of bread: cranberry, chocolate chip, nut, chips, fruit or whatever. Add the fruit of your choice. We provide a bunch of ideas following this recipe.

Yield: 1 each loaf pan 9 x 5

3	cups	flour
4	tsp	baking powder (don't overdo it here)
1/2	tsp	salt
1 1/2	cups	milk
1	cup	oleo, melted and cooled
4	each	eggs
2	tsp	vanilla

- Set the oven to 350 F. Prepare a loaf pan by greasing and flouring the bottom only. Or use parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, combine all the dry ingredients
- Beat the eggs until just blended but not frothy, and add the remaining wet ingredients; stir together.
- Add liquid to dry and blend with a spoon or fork until just mixed together.
- Fold in nuts or whatever now (about 1 1/2 to 2 cups)
- Bake about 35 minutes or so but check at 30. It is done when a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
- Remove and allow to cool about 10 minutes, then run a butter knife around the edge of the pan, and turn out the cake.
- Cool a bit longer before slicing to serve.

Chocolate Chip Nut Bread

In a bowl, toss 1 cup each chocolate chips and pecans, walnuts, or chopped peanuts in flour to coat. Fold gently into the batter.

Cranberry Almond or Walnut Bread

In a bowl, combine 1 cup each of dried cranberries and walnuts or pecans. Toss lightly in some flour to coat. Fold gently into the batter.

Ginger Spice & Nut Bread

Add to batter before mixing: 2 tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp ground ginger, 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg and a pinch of clove.

In a bowl, toss 1/2 cup each of walnuts and pecans in flour. Fold gently into the batter.

Lemon Bread

Omit the vanilla. Add 2 tablespoon of lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of lemon zest when making the batter.

Orange Cranberry Bread

Omit the vanilla and reduce milk to 1 1/4 cup. Add 1/3 cup orange juice and 1 tablespoon of orange zest when making the batter. Fold in 1 cup dried cranberries.

Raisin Pecan Bread

In a bowl, combine 1 cup each of raisins and pecans in a bowl. Sprinkle a bit of flour on and toss them to coat. Fold gently into the batter.



Gingerbread

This is old-fashioned gingerbread. It's cake-like, with strong notes of molasses and ginger. Served warm with butter, it's an amazing bread!

Yield: a 10-inch layer or a loaf pan

1 1/2	cups	molasses
3/4	cup	water
1/2	cup	butter (or oleo)
3/4	tsp	salt
3	Tbsp	ginger
1 1/2	tsp	baking soda
1/2	tsp	baking powder
3	cups	flour

- Set the oven to 375 and prepare a pan.
- Combine the dry ingredients in a bowl and set aside.
- In a saucepan, put molasses, water and butter. Bring to a boil and cook just until butter melts. Remove from heat.
- Add the dry ingredients and blend until smooth.
- Transfer to a baking pan.
- Bake about 30 minutes or so for a 10-inch layer, or about 45-60 for a loaf pan. Check early for doneness.
- Remove, let cool 10 minutes before turning out of the pan.

Note: You can make a White frosting or glaze to top the gingerbread, as shown in the previous page photo.

Sweet Doughs

Bread Pudding

Bread pudding as we know it got its start back in the 12th century. In England, it was called Poor Man's Pudding. Rightly so, because it lets all those crusty pieces of bread serve a higher purpose.

The secret to a great bread pudding is to use old bread, hydrate well and bake in a pan of hot water to prevent its crusting. And sauce. A good sauce is a must (but it won't cover up a bad bread pudding).

Yield: 1 full size steamtable pan (2" deep)

/3	quarts	milk, scalded
14	each	eggs, beaten
3	cups	sugar
1 1/2	tsp	salt
2	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring
1	Tbsp	cinnamon
1	tsp	nutmeg
1	cup	oleo, melted
10	cups	bread, cubed
2	cups	raisins (optional)

- In a bowl, combine everything but bread and raisins. Blend well.
- In a full pan (prepared with food spray), arrange the bread and raisins if using.
- Pour the liquid evenly over the bread. Put the pan in a larger pan with about an inch of HOT water, then place in the oven.
- Bake about an hour or so, until it springs back somewhat like a cake when tapped with your fingers.
- Remove, let stand a few minutes before portioning.
- Serve with a sauce. Some recipes follow.

Caramel Sauce

Yield: about 3 1/2 cups

1 cup butter
2 cups brown sugar (light is preferred; either will work)
1/2 tsp salt
1 Tbsp vanilla flavoring
1 cup evaporated milk

- In a saucepan, melt butter and add brown sugar. Bring to a boil.
- Remove from heat and whisk in the salt, vanilla and milk.
- Continue to whip until all is incorporated.
- You can reheat before service (so you can make this ahead).

Lemon Sauce

Yield: about 4 cups

1 cup white sugar
2 Tbsp corn starch
1/4 tsp salt
2 cups boiling water
2 Tbsp butter
1 Tbsp lemon zest, very finely grated
1/4 cup lemon juice

- In a saucepan, combine dry ingredients and blend well.
- Slowly, while blending with a wire whip, add in boiling water.
- Cook until the sauce thickens, then remove from heat.
- Add the butter and whisk in vigorously, then lemon and zest.
- Serve.

Vanilla Sauce

Yield: about 4 cups

1	cup	brown sugar (light preferred)
2	Tbsp	flour
2	each	eggs
1/4	cup	butter, melted
2 1/2	cups	milk
1/8	tsp	salt
3	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring

- Combine the dry ingredients and blend together.
- In a saucepan, blend eggs, milk and butter well, then add in the dry and whip together until blended.
- Heat over medium heat (not too hot); stirring until the mixture thickens (it should coat the back of a spoon when dipped in).
- Remove from heat, stir in the vanilla and mix well.



Cinnamon Roll Dough

You can taste the difference in a great cinnamon roll and one made with bread dough. More precisely, you can feel the difference in the texture every time you take a bite. This is a great formula for cinnamon rolls that taste like those sold in malls across America.

Yield: 24 cinnamon rolls (a half sheet pan, in 4 x 6 rows)

2	cups	milk, warmed to about 105 to 110 F (not hotter)
2	Tbsp	yeast
4	each	eggs, at room temperature
1	cup	granulated sugar
2	tsp	salt
9	cups	flour
1/3	cup	ground cinnamon
2	cups	brown sugar, packed (light or dark is okay)
3/4	cup	oleo, melted

- In the mixer, put milk, granulated sugar and yeast. Mix just a moment to wet the yeast and let proof until it foams.
- Add the eggs, flour and salt. Mix on low speed until the flour takes up the liquid and starts to make a dough.
- Turn the mixer to a higher speed and knead the dough a short time, just to develop it a bit. When it cleans the bowl, remove it.
- Put in a large bowl, cover with PVC film and let rise until double.
- Remove, punch down, round up and let it rest 10 minutes.
- While it rests, mix the cinnamon and brown sugar together.
- When the dough is ready, roll it out into a sheet about 18 x 40.
- Spread the melted oleo over the surface except for the 2 inches from the edge away from you (to create a place to bind the roll).
- Sprinkle the sugar/cinnamon mixture evenly over the butter, leaving the unbuttered area alone.

Now roll the sheet into an even log. Pinch the unbuttered end to the log to hold it together and roll it seam side down.

Cut the log into 24 equal pieces as shown.

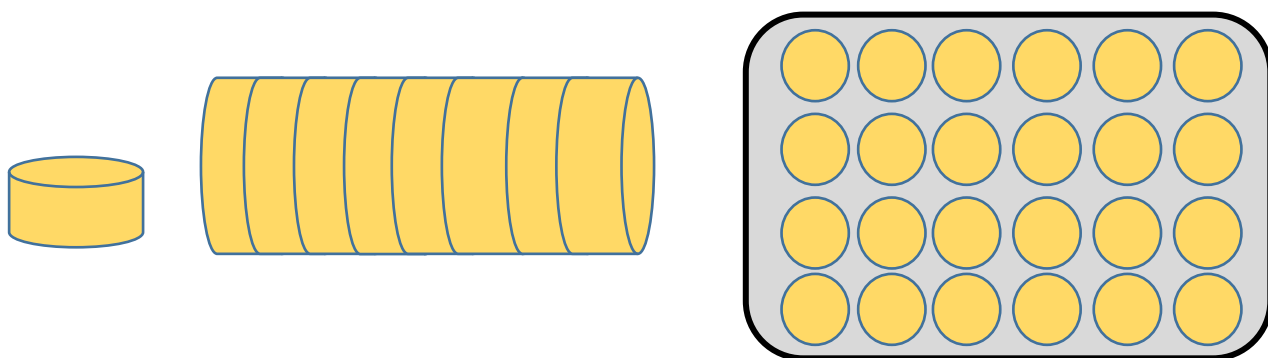
Place the rolls on a sheet pan as shown below.

Set the oven to 400 F.

Allow rolls to proof until about double in size, maybe half an hour.

Bake for about 15 minutes (but check after about 12).

Remove and let cool before icing with the icing (recipe below):



Cinnamon Roll Cream Cheese Icing

1	cup	oleo, softened
8	oz	cream cheese, softened
1/2	cup	butter, softened
4	cups	powdered sugar
1 1/2	tsp	vanilla flavoring

- Cream together all ingredients until a consistent frosting is achieved.
- Spread over rolls that have been cooled but still slightly warm.

Danish Dough

This is a very rich, delicate dough. It's sometimes referred to as a "slack" dough because it is so loose and sticky when first mixed. It is developed in the cooler overnight.

Baked, it is a light, buttery layered pastry that is flaky but not so much as puff pastry. Use it to make Danish pastry, Strudel or other pastries.

Yield: enough dough for about 48 squares (each about 4" square)

1 1/2	cups	water, lukewarm
3	Tbsp	sugar
2	Tbsp	yeast
6	each	eggs, beaten
1	tsp	salt
1/2	cup	butter or oleo, melted and cooled
7	cups	flour

- In mixer, combine water, sugar and yeast. Let yeast proof.
- Add eggs and blend in.
- Add remaining ingredients and mix into a very thick batter.
- Scrape batter onto a well-floured sheet pan, then sprinkle the top with flour.
- Cover with plastic wrap and put in the cooler.
- The next day, remove, and do a series of "three-fold rolls" as shown on the next page.

Danish or Any Laminated Dough (3-fold roll)



1. Sheet out dough to 1/2" thick. Spread softened oleo over 2/3 of the dough.



2. Fold the unbuttered third to the center of the dough, and then fold the other third on top of that.



3. Roll out dough to about 1/2" thickness again. Butter and fold as you did in steps 1 and 2.



4. Fold the dough onto itself once more, then roll out, then wrap it with plastic wrap, and chill.

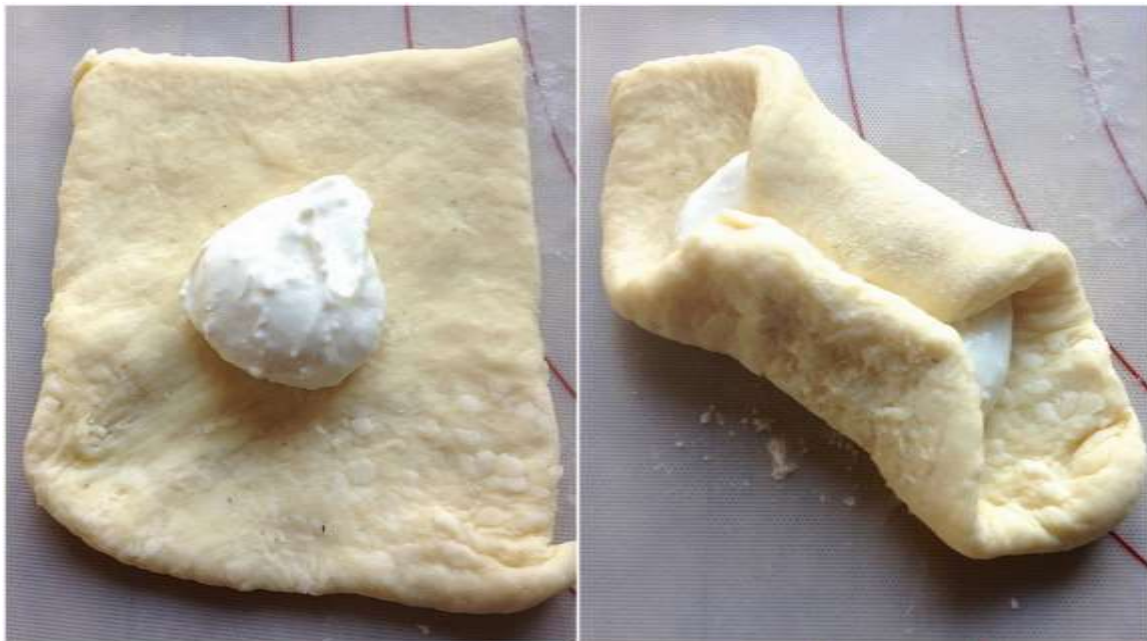
- The dough should chill several hours after lamination. This allows it to rest, to become more pliable, and the gluten to develop.
- At this point, you can work it into the shapes you want to make a variety of products. The next photo sequence shows how to roll and cut into squares.



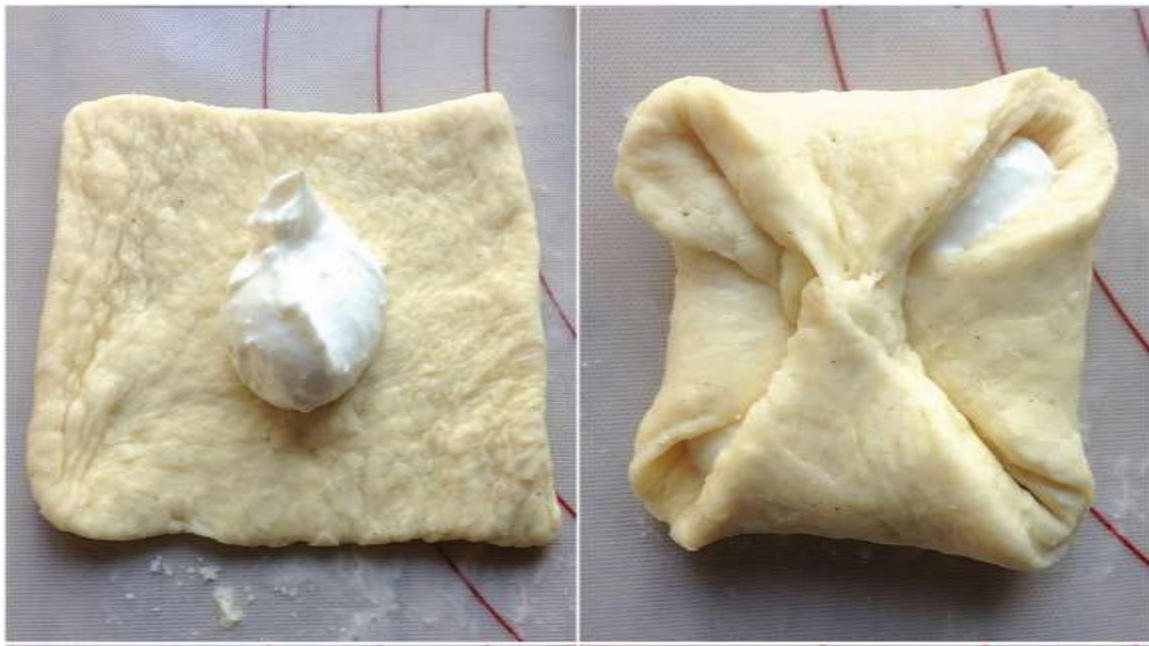
5. When ready to make pastry, remove from cooler and cut into thirds. Roll about 1/8 inch thick.

6. Cut into squares, each about 4 inches by 4 inches.

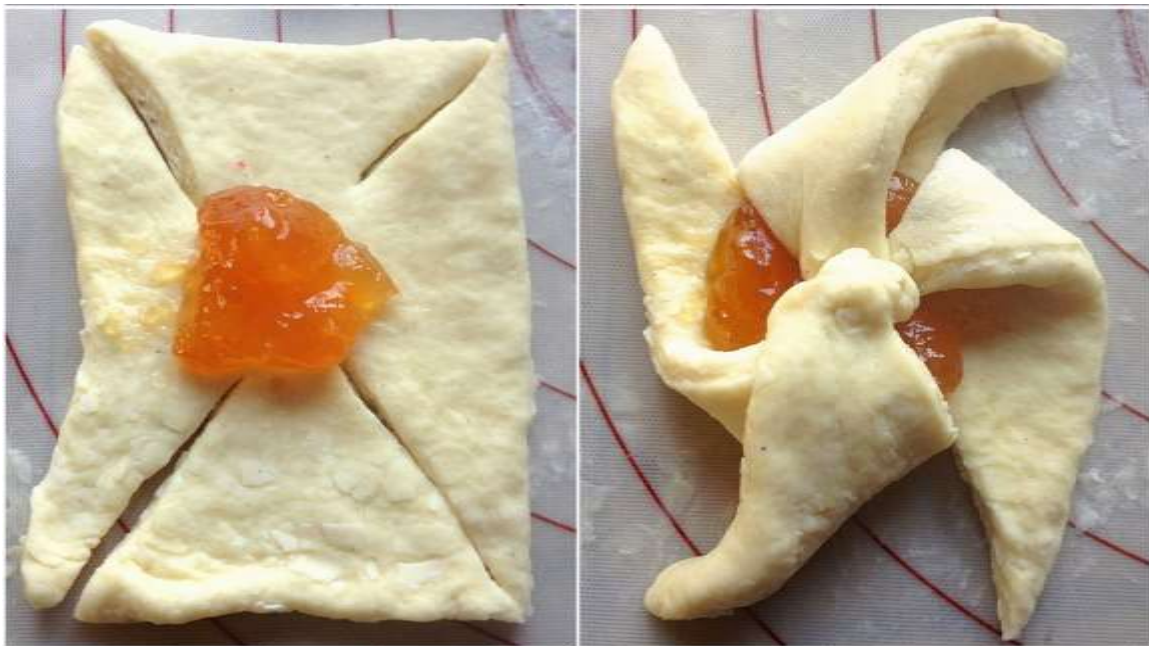
- The photo above left shows the dough after you remove from the cooler. Cut a piece from it, then wrap and chill the remainder.
- Roll the dough into a sheet about 1/8 inch thick.
- Cut into squares about 4 inches. If you make them smaller, you get a better yield. As your technique improves, you can work smaller.



A traditional Danish. Fill, fold corners to the center and pinch.



Another easy fold, good for holding in a loose filling. Bring all corners to the center and pinch together.



A pinwheel is made by first cutting almost to the center, filling and then grabbing a corner from each edge. Bring to center and pinch.

Donuts

First things first. Donuts aren't hard to do; you just need to follow some basic procedures and have some patience – and clean oil.

Seriously, have clean oil. Fish and shrimp donuts probably won't top the list of favorites. Our basic donut dough will make about 6 dozen.

1	cup	sugar, granulated
5	Tbsp	yeast
1 1/2	cups	lukewarm water
4	each	eggs, cold (to lower the temperature of the dough)
1	Tbsp	salt
9	cups	flour
3/4	cup	shortening
2 1/4	tsp	baking powder
2	cups	milk (this will vary)

- In mixer, proof yeast with water and some of the sugar.
- Add remaining ingredients – salt last – and mix on low until a dough is achieved and liquids are absorbed by flour.
- Turn up mixer speed and knead until dough becomes smooth and starts to clean up bowl. At this point, you may need to add flour if dough is too slack, or liquid if dough seems too stiff. It should be pliable and probably sticky.
- When dough is fully developed (bowl cleanup, smooth exterior), turn out, round up and put in an oiled bowl to proof. Cover bowl.
- After dough is doubled in size – about 1 1/2 hours, turn out of bowl, punch down and round up. Allow to rest about 10 minutes.
- Roll dough out into a sheet 1/2 inch to 3/4 inch thick. Be careful to keep the dough thickness even. This will affect the “midriff”, the light fryer line around the center of a properly made donut.

- Pull the dough away from the counter (flapping); remove excess flour from the work surface. Let the dough rest about 5 minutes; otherwise they will have an egg shape like shown below, right:

At left is a donut from dough that rested. At right is a donut cut immediately. The “egg” shape is the result of the gluten in the dough springing back.

- After resting, cut the donuts, place on parchment paper to proof. If at all possible, proof in a warm, moist location so the donuts don't form a crust as they proof. They can be ready in as little as 20 minutes or as long as 35 or so.
- Check for spring back when touching them. If the donut will hold an indentation without collapsing, it is ready. If it springs back to original shape. If it collapses, they're over proofed. Avoid that.

Set Up to Fry

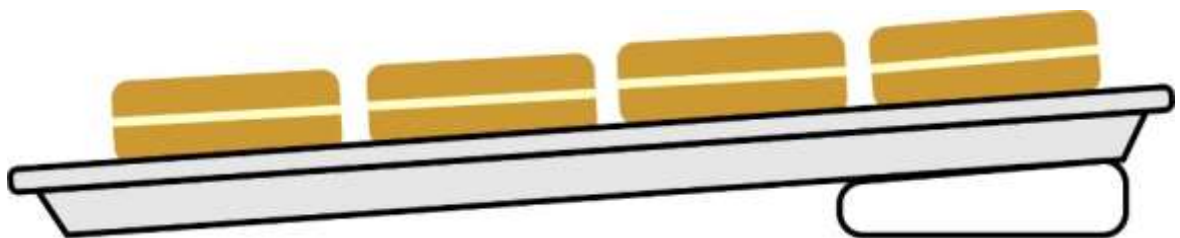
- Set your fryer to 350 to 365 F. Too hot and donuts will brown before fully cooking. Fry in an open fryer with no baskets.
- Arrange some drain grates on large sheet pans. This will be a landing zone for the cooked donuts. Don't try to drain them on paper towels; you'll end up with soggy donuts. They need the air circulation to prevent further cooking and steaming as they cool enough to handle.
- Also think about what you'll use to turn the donuts. Something like a long drum stick, a skewer or the back end of a metal spoon are best. You want to be able to flip the donut without damaging it.
- Also, have your glaze ready. The best glaze is a warm glaze that pours easily and then hardens (recipe here in this section).

I Believe it's Time for Me to Fry...

Before we start, here's a sample setup for your fry and finish station:

/

- Working in batches, load the fryer with donuts but leave a little room so they can float freely. Remember, they'll expand.
- Fry them until they achieve a nice, golden brown. Then, using the tip of a sharpening steel, flip them one by one.
- Let them cook until you have that same color, then remove with a skimmer or slotted spoon. Don't use tongs because that will crush them when you lift the donuts out of the oil.
- Let them cool for a short time. You want them a bit warm when you glaze them, but not hot.
- When glazing, have the station at a shallow angle like shown. This allows the glaze to pool at one end of the pan. It can be reheated and used again. A galley towel makes a good prop, as shown here.
- Put the donuts close together and pour glaze over them.
- Let cool and transfer to a serving tray.



King Cake (Gazette de Rois)

Well, we'll close this reference out in royal style.

King cake is thought to have come over from France in the late 1800's. It's usually made with brioche-like dough, but you can get great results with the Cinnamon Roll dough in this section. First, we'll review shaping the cake, the filling, and cover the icing (pardon the pun).

Yield: one large or 2 small king cakes

1 batch cinnamon roll dough

1 batch cinnamon roll filling

1 batch icing

As needed colored sugar sprinkles (you can order or make them)

- Make the cinnamon roll dough and following the directions up to the point where have rolled it out in a sheet.
- /Sheet out the dough, then spread filling across it, leaving one edge uncovered. Later you will seal along this seam.
- /Roll the dough into a log, being careful to make it even. Roll it as tightly as you can without tearing the dough.
- /Moisten the edge of the dough with water; just enough to dampen the dough.
- Pinch the edge of the dough to the roll to make a seam. Pinch tightly so it stays together.
- /Arrange the dough on a sheet pan in an oval or a rectangle as you prefer.

- Optionally, you can use scissors or a knife (scissors are easier) to slash the outer edge of the dough as shown below right). Don't go too far into the dough.
- /Let proof about 40 minutes, until nearly doubled in size.
- Bake at 375 F for 30 to 35 minutes.
- Remove and allow to cool before applying icing and sugar.
- Pour the icing down the center of each cake and let it flow over the sides. Immediately sprinkle the colored sugar on the cakes.

Traditional Cinnamon Filling

2	cups	brown sugar, packed
2	Tbsp	ground cinnamon
1/2	tsp	ground nutmeg (optional)
1	cup	flour
1 1/2	cups	pecans, chopped
1	cup	oleo, melted

Combine everything but the oleo and blend together.

Pour in the oleo and blend until the mixture is evenly crumbled.

Cream Cheese Filling

1	lb	cream cheese, softens
1	cup	granulated sugar
1/3	cup	flour
2	each	eggs, beaten
1 1/2	Tbsp	vanilla flavoring

- Cream all the ingredients together

King Cake Icing

2 cups powdered sugar
1 tsp vanilla flavoring
3 Tbsp water

- Mix ingredients together, adding water slowly until you achieve a thick, but pourable icing.

Colored Sugar: Put sugar in a plastic bag, add a few drops of color and shake well. Spread onto a parchment sheet and let dry by baking for a few minutes. Break up lumps and let cool.