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The Essential Guide To Baking

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The Essential Guide To Baking



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Our Daily Bread

Making bread from scratch is probably the most time consuming task of all baking. Bread baking is not hard to do, it just takes time. If you like to create unique flavors or like special health type breads, then scratch baking is the way to go. If you like the smell and taste of fresh baked bread, but don't want to spend the time making it from scratch, there are plenty of frozen breads you can bake. A premix will still take a lot of time to prepare, but everything is pre-measured and ready to go.

You'll need a powerful mixer to mix bread from scratch. If you are a serious bread maker, you must keep notes of your technique. Bread making is extremely variable, but can be done correctly time after time simply by paying attention to your environment.

Professional bakers must always alter or add to their formulas with each change in their environment. A different oven, mixer, or time of year will change the way they make bread type doughs.

You must become aware of the variables of your kitchen environment to produce perfect yeast raised breads, doughnuts and sweet doughs.

Many bakers make breads from premixed ingredients which will produce excellent bread. When using a dough made from a premix or frozen you will find the methods of preparation, baking tips, finishing tips, and bread handling tips to be of value. Using premixed ingredients saves a little time and reduces the needed skill level as far as scaling and mixing goes. However, all the other parts of bread handling is exactly the same as making from scratch. Using my suggestions will save you time and money no matter which form of mixing you chose.

MIXING BREADS

Make sure all your equipment is clean. Use the proper mixer attachment for mixing bread dough.

All your ingredients should be cool when possible. Your water should be cool or very cold (in the summer months). When you are using a premix — use the recommended water temperature.

Prepare a place for your dough to rise in bulk before you make it into loaves. This place should be draft free and about 80 degrees.

When the dough is unusually wet and sticky, add more flour (a little at a time) until the dough is right. When the dough is unusually dry at the beginning of the mixing time, add a little more cool water. Remember, all types of bread doughs have different characteristics. Some will be wet and sticky, while others will be dry. Your baking experience will teach you which is right.

Add nut-meats, fruit, raisins, dates, etc. at the very end of your mixing time

After mixing, place the bread in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover the bowl with a damp cloth or paper towel to protect the dough from drafts.

BAKING BREAD

Pre-set your oven about twenty minutes before baking. When the oven reaches your pre-set

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temperature, use an oven thermometer to make sure the setting is correct.

Season all your new baking pans by applying a very thin coat of vegetable oil and baking them empty for about 25 minutes at 400 degrees. Cool completely, wipe dry and LIGHTLY grease them with all-purpose shortening before using.

When you use a spray release agent on your pans, make sure that for breads, the release agent does NOT contain flour.

A very thin coating of all-purpose shortening (hydrogenated) will cause breads to release.

Heavy steel pans are best for baking breads, light weight pans may cause the crust to brown before the middle is done.

Breads that contain sugar and milk will brown quickly, sometimes before they are done. Place a piece of brown paper on their tops about half-way through the baking time.

Bread will bake fine at 350 to 410 degrees. Make sure your oven temperature setting is correct.

Cut hearth type breads like French bread and rolls before they completely rise to size. If you wait, they may fall. Make your cuts about one fourth of an inch deep to insure good expansion in the oven and a pretty loaf.

Brush on a wash of a fresh whole egg, mixed with a pinch of salt to make the crust shine. Brush this mixture on all crusty type breads before you cut them. Do not let this wash get on your baking pan. Egg wash will cause bread to stick to the pan.

Brush on a wash of oil or water to pan breads. Use water when you wish to sprinkle on a topping. Use oil to make the top crust tender. Brush on before the bread rises. Do not let the wash get on your baking pan.

Do not let bread rise in a draft. The dough will form a crust that will split and may cause small loaves. Let all bread rise to about 2/3 its desired finished size. Cover the bowl with a wet cloth or a damp paper towel.

Use a hand spray bottle filled with water and spray a mist into the oven just before putting in the loaves. Crusty type breads like French bread should be sprayed as soon as you place them in the oven and again about 10 minutes later. They will have better expansion and a crispy golden crust.

Bread should be kept at a room temperature of about 80 degrees while rising. Cooler temperature will make the dough take longer to rise. Warmer temperature will cause the dough to rise too quickly. A few degrees one way or the other won't matter.

Bake rolls at a higher temperature than loaves, even when you are using the same dough for each. The smaller unit needs the higher temperature to avoid being dry.

When your bread dough rises too much -- don't dismay, just reform the dough again and let it rise to the correct size.

When the dough feels real warm, place it, pan and all, covered in the refrigerator for about

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15 minutes. After you take it out, allow the dough to rise the way you like and bake as usual.

Brush the tops of brown-and-serve rolls with melted butter or margarine before baking. The flavor and crust color will be better.

A QUICK TOUR OF BREAD FAULTS:

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Crust too dark ---- Causes.

1. Oven temperature too high.
2. Excessive milk or sugar.
3. Excessive baking time.
4. Over proofing.

Crust too light ---- Causes.

1. Oven temperature too low.
2. Insufficient milk or sugar.
3. Insufficient baking time.
4. Insufficient proofing.
5. Insufficient mixing.

Crust Broken ---- Causes.

1. Insufficient proofing.
2. Insufficient liquid.

Crust too hard ---- Causes.

1. Oven temperature too high.
2. Insufficient proofing.
3. Insufficient sugar or shortening.
4. Excessive steam.
5. Insufficient liquid.
6. Baking time too long.

Crust too soft ---- Causes.

1. Oven temperature too low.
2. Excessive sugar/egg yolks/shortening.
3. Excessive oil/margarine as a wash.
4. Insufficient steam during baking.
5. Baking time too short.

INTERNAL APPEARANCE

Poor flavor ---- Causes.

1. Over mixing/resulting in a hot dough.
2. Insufficient floor time.

Poor texture ---- Causes.

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1. Wrong type of flour.
2. Insufficient floor time.
3. Insufficient proofing.
4. Insufficient mixing time.
5. Excessive dough heat in mixing.
6. Excessive proofing.

PRODUCTION HINTS FOR BREADS:

BAKING:

Bake bread 350 to 475 degrees in a standard oven.
Bake bread 340 to 450 degrees in a convection oven.
Give correct floor/proofing time.
Wash with correct ingredient to suit the type of bread being produced.
Cool correctly to avoid sweating.

MIXING:

Use cold or ice water.
Follow the formula method exactly.
Use the correct flour.
All equipment should be clean.
Avoid over mixing the dough.
Use fresh, high quality ingredients.
All bread doughs should have a finished temp. of 80 to 86 degrees.

HANDLING:

Remove from the pans as soon as possible after baking.
Let the bread products cool out of a draft.
Place in bags as soon as cool, warm bread will mold quickly if placed in bags.
Freeze bread as soon as it is cool and always in bags.
All equipment should be clean to avoid mold.
Yeast dies at 140 degrees. Brown and serve rolls must reach an internal temperature of 140 degrees in the oven.
Rolls may be frozen, but only if they have gone through a correct processing procedure.
Rolls must be made and frozen (in bags) as quickly as possible.

PROBLEMS WITH BREADS:

PROBLEM: What is the best way to bake brown and serve rolls?

First, brush their tops with melted butter or margarine. Bake at the recommended temperature (on their package), but be careful of dark coated baking sheets. Dark coated baking sheets may cause the bottoms to burn before they are done. Bake brown and serve rolls at a high temperature to insure a crispy, flavorful crust.

PROBLEM: Breads that are always too hard and heavy.

Breads made from scratch or from a mix must have an internal temperature of about 80 degrees

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for the yeast to work properly. Cold dough will not expand properly. Make sure the bread rises in a warm draft free environment.

PROBLEM: Bread that rises too fast in the pan.

Use cool or cold water in the mix. The place you let the bread rise in bulk should be about 80 degrees. Place the dough in the refrigerator for a few minutes to cool down (while the dough is still in bulk form).

PROBLEM: French bread that has a pale crust.

Spray or paint the loaves with water (before cutting). Use an egg wash to make the crust really brown up. French bread must have a high temperature to bake properly. Check your oven to make sure the temperature is correct. Add a little sugar to the mix.

PROBLEM: Tough pizza crust.

Most of the time a pizza crust dough should be wet and sticky (use a little extra water). Toss in plenty of spices. Oil your pan with olive oil. Try baking the crust first, then add any topping and bake only to melt the cheese. Try dipping your fingers in olive oil when you flatten the crust in the pan. Use plenty of olive oil and the crust will be flavorful and crispy.

PROBLEM: Bread loaves and rolls that are heavy and soggy in the middle.

When everything else has been done right, maybe the unit weight is too heavy. Try making the pieces smaller and let them rise longer.

PROBLEM: Bread loaves that cave in on their sides when removed from the pan.

Always remove bread from the pan as soon as taken from the oven. The crust sweats and may fall. Make sure that you use Bread flour in the mix. Weak flour will cause loaves to fall. Make sure the loaves are done. Thump the top and if the loaf sounds hollow — it is done. Setting (just baked) loaves in a cool draft of air will sometimes cause their sides to cave in. When the dough is allowed to rise too much before baking the loaves will sometimes collapse.

PROBLEM: Is it all right to use Oatmeal or Oat bran in my bread mix.

Sure. Oat bran may be added with the flour, but add Oatmeal about half way through the mixing cycle. Do not use instant Oatmeal. Instant Oatmeal will dissolve and change the bread's chemistry. Try substituting some of the water with applesauce and use a little cinnamon in the mix when making Oat meal bread.

PROBLEM: Soft crusty breads.

The secret to good crusty breads is to use very little (if any) fats, egg yolks, milks or sugar in the mix. Always serve crusty breads as soon as they are baked for the best flavor and appearance. Use only Bread Flour and make sure the dough is on the stiff side rather than soft and sticky. However, some crusty breads are very sticky (excess water). These breads are made by using an extra warm dough and baking quickly at a high temperature.

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PROBLEM: Making bread loaves and rolls have a shiny crust.

Wash their tops with a whole fresh egg mixed with a pinch of salt. This may cause the top to brown too quickly, so wash the loaves about 3/4 of the way through their baking time. Rolls can either be dipped or sprayed with evaporated milk. This will cause their tops to shine.

PROBLEM: Is it all right to freeze my breads and rolls?

Yes. Freezing is the best way to keep breads and rolls fresh. Always freeze breads and rolls even when keeping them for only a few days.

PROBLEM: What should I use to keep my breads from molding?

Nothing, unless you use a propionate in the mix. Always use clean equipment and pans. Cool breads quickly in a draft free place. Freeze breads to keep them and mold will never be a problem.

Helpful Tips With Breads

FRENCH BREAD:

French bread is probably the most popular crusty bread. Its characteristics are a fairly dense, chewy center surrounded by a golden brown crispy crust. French bread dough may be shaped in a loaf, thin stick, or a roll. The flavor is usually rather bland and is best when eaten very fresh and hot. French bread serves as an excellent compliment choice for soups, salads, red meat and of course, all sorts of pasta dishes.

FRENCH BREAD TIPS:

Wash the tops of French bread with a mixture of one tablespoon salt and one cup water. Wash the first time before the bread rises. Bake French bread at 425 degrees for 15 minutes, wash with the salt water mixture again and turn the oven down to 375 degrees. Let bake for 10 minutes and wash with the salt water mixture again. Continue to bake until done. This will give your French bread a very crispy and flavorful crust. Let raw, frozen French bread dough thaw before brushing with the salt water mixture.

Slice French bread loaves, sticks or rolls and spread on a mixture of butter/garlic salt. Cover with a dry paper towel and use your microwave for a soft bread. Grill in your oven's broiler, cut side up, for a crispy bread.

French bread that is dry or stale can still be used as delicious croutons. Slice the loaf thin, spread with butter, butter/garlic salt, or butter/Parmesan cheese, then toast in your oven's broiler until very crisp.

WHITE PAN BREAD, LOAVES AND ROLLS:

White bread, Egg bread, Milk bread are types of bread that are usually baked in heavy steel pans. They are shaped into loaves, sliced thin and best suited for sandwiches. White bread's characteristic soft texture and thin crust lends itself to making a variety of small soft dinner rolls.

White bread is usually a flavorful bread that is on the sweet side with a slight egg taste. White bread compliments fish dishes and cold cuts. In the shape of a roll, it goes with about any meal.

TIPS ON WHITE BREAD:

Brush melted butter on the tops of bread loaves and rolls as soon as they are removed from the oven. This will greatly enhance their flavor.

Since white bread rolls bake quickly, dip them in evaporated milk before they rise for baking. This milk dip will give your rolls, whether made from scratch or bought frozen, a rich brown crust.

For a different look and taste, follow the milk dip by sprinkling the rolls with poppy or sesame seeds. Do not wash white bread loaves with evaporated milk. The rich dough will brown quickly, but will not bake enough in the center.

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Gently split the top, length-wise, of your white bread loaf after the dough has risen to the top of the pan. Pour — don't brush — a trickle of melted butter or margarine in the cut. This will give your loaves a richer taste.

Add raisins and if you like, a little cinnamon to the white bread dough. Make up the bread as usual for a delicious raisin bread. Spread a water/powdered sugar icing on top after the loaves cool.

Flatten your white bread dough in the shape of a rectangle and wash with evaporated milk. Liberally sprinkle on a mixture of cinnamon/ground red cinnamon candy/ granulated sugar. (Grind up red cinnamon flavored candies in your blender before mixing with the cinnamon/granulated sugar.) Carefully roll the dough into a loaf and place in your baking pan. Let the bread rise a little over the top of the pan before baking. After the bread cools, spread a water/powdered sugar icing on top of your loaf.

RYE AND PUMPERNICKEL BREAD:

Rye and Pumpernickel bread are German breads. They are best suited for cold-cuts, cheeses and hamburger. Their characteristics are, a soft crust and a firm texture that has a deliciously sweet aroma. Known for their keeping qualities, some say they even improve with age when wrapped in foil and stored. Rye bread can be baked in a pan, in a long loaf, or shaped in a ball. Pumpernickel bread is usually baked in a pan, although it's sometimes baked in the shape of a ball.

TIPS ON RYE AND PUMPERNICKEL BREAD:

Rye and Pumpernickel bread are both very slow risers. Always let them have plenty of time to rise before baking. The most common mistake is to put them in the oven too soon. This cause the loaves to be excessively heavy.

Wash Rye bread with a mixture of whole egg/salt after the loaf has completed about three fourths of the baking time. This will give the bread a shiny crust.

Following the suggested mixing times and methods is very important in making Rye and Pumpernickel bread. Their flavor depends on the proper aging of ingredients.

Use a broom straw (real or plastic) and gently punch tiny holes in the Rye and Pumpernickel bread after the dough has risen to the top of the pan. This will make the dough stay flat on top and help the loaf maintain a fine grained texture. Do not be rough or else the dough will fall. Rye and Pumpernickel breads have dominating flavors and are best eaten at room temperature. Spicy or sharp meats and cheeses are best, because they blend with the rye flavor enough to compliment it. Serve with a glass of cold beer for a perfect rye or pumpernickel meal.

ITALIAN BREADS:

Italian breads are of two types. One type is like a French bread in that the loaf has a thick crispy crust with a full bodied center. This type of bread is usually made in loaves and rolls. The flavor of this bread is rather bland and compliments soups, salads, pasta and dinner servings. As with all types of crusty bread, Italian bread is best if eaten very fresh and hot. The other type of Italian bread has a thin crust and an easy bite. This type of bread is used for Pizza crust and sandwiches. This dough may be baked as a

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plain loaf or it may have all kinds of spices, onions and olives baked in.

TIPS ON ITALIAN BREAD:

Make up and baking of Italian crusty bread is almost the same as French bread. However, the Italian version is usually not shiny. The bread is dull in appearance with loose bread flour on its top and bottom. Yellow corn flour is the proper dusting flour for Italian breads, but corn flour is difficult to find, so use bread flour instead.

Ground Fennel is a great Italian flavor. Surprisingly many recipes do not call for Fennel. Add a little Fennel to your bread dough or pizza dough and see what a difference it makes.

Use plenty of olive oil to grease your pizza pan. Use olive oil to brush on the top of Italian flat breads. Olive oil will flavor the crust and make it crispy.

OATMEAL BREAD:

Oatmeal bread is a pan bread baked in a loaf. The loaf is good as a sandwich bread, but also is great as toast. Oatmeal bread's characteristics are a thin brown crust with a soft, but firm bodied center. Oatmeal bread is extremely nutritious and is excellent for children's snacks.

TIPS ON OATMEAL BREAD:

If you don't have a recipe for Oatmeal bread just use your best White bread recipe. Substitute Old Fashion Oatmeal for 10 to 15 percent of the flour. Substitute Applesauce for half the water or milk. Add a small amount of cinnamon for flavor.

Brush the top of your loaf with water and sprinkle on some oatmeal for a unique appearance.

Add raisins to your dough and increase the nutritional value. Nut-meats may also be added for extra flavor.

CROISSANTS:

Croissants originally were served as a light French breakfast roll. They are now used for sandwiches, but still add distinction to any meal, at any time of day. They are characterized by their thin crispy layers of buttery flavored crust. Croissants are difficult to make properly and are usually bought raw and frozen or pre-baked and frozen. Frozen raw triangles of croissant dough are also very popular because they can be filled with cheese, cold cuts, or chocolate before baking.

TIPS ON CROISSANTS:

Thaw raw frozen Croissant dough in a warm, draft place until they have risen to almost their full size. Sometimes this may take many hours. Professionals sometimes let Croissants rise over night. Brush croissants with an egg wash before they begin to rise. Bake Croissants at 425 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes. Do not under bake.

When you use frozen Croissant triangles, let them thaw only enough to bend, then add the filling or roll up into the Croissant shape. Do not let the dough completely thaw before you make Croissants.

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When you make your Croissants from scratch, pay attention to keeping the dough cold at all times. The most common mistake is letting the dough become warm.

Use a mixture of half real butter and half shortening for Croissant roll-in. The roll-in must be cool.

BRIOCHES:

Brioche bread is a slightly sweet French breakfast bread that is usually made into a distinctive roll shape. Brioche dough can be chilled, rolled thin and cut into triangles to make a Croissant shaped roll. Brioche dough can be used also as a crust for deep dish meat pies. Brioche dough is also delicious made into a Pepper bread loaf.

TIPS ON BRIOCHE BREAD:

Brioche is the richest of all bread doughs. Rolls should be baked quickly at 385 degrees. Bread loaves should never be baked higher than 350 degrees.

Wash Brioche with an egg wash to make it shine. Do not let the wash get on the baking pan. Brioche is very fragile and will tear apart if the dough sticks to the baking pan.

Add `dustless' black pepper to the dough and form into a loaf shape to make Pepper bread. Wash the top of the Pepper bread loaf with egg wash, but be careful not to let the wash get on the baking pan. Let the dough rise to slightly over the top of the pan and bake at 350 degrees until done. Carefully remove the loaf from the pan and cool on a rack in a draft free place.

Use melted butter to grease the muffin pans for Brioche rolls.

HAMBURGER BUNS:

Hamburger buns are totally American in their origin. They have a thin crust with a firm, but easy biting center. Most of the time they have plain tops, but sesame seeds give them a unique flavor. Hamburger buns made commercially are excellent, but if you want to customize the taste, or size, it's best to make them from scratch.

TIPS ON HAMBURGER BUNS:

Use any White bread, Egg bread, or Milk bread recipe to make Hamburger buns. Any bread that makes good dinner rolls will also make good Hamburger buns. Make the dough on the soft side for buns.

Let the Hamburger buns rise to almost full size. Then bake them at a high temperature --- 425 degrees for about 10 minutes. Do not use any kind of wash on Hamburger buns. Turn the buns upside down for cooling as soon as they are removed from the oven.

Mix finely chopped onion into the dough for a unique flavored Hamburger bun.

Make half sized Hamburger buns and use sausage patties for the meat. Half sized Hamburgers are great for parties.

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Brush the dough very lightly with water if you want to sprinkle sesame seeds or poppy seeds on top to the buns.

Dill seeds and chopped onions mixed in the dough is also a different way to flavor Hamburger buns.

WHOLE-WHEAT BREAD:

Whole-wheat or Grain bread is full of flavor as well as nutritional. Whole-wheat bread is a pan bread, baked in a loaf. Rolls and buns are sometimes made of whole-wheat dough, but the texture is best suited for loaves. Sliced whole-wheat bread makes excellent sandwiches and is good served with many meals. The best whole-wheat doughs are really a combination of whole-wheat flours, white bread flours and rye flours.

TIPS ON WHOLE-WHEAT BREAD:

Add raw sun-flower seeds to your whole-wheat bread dough. Sun-flower seeds have a nut like taste and are simply delicious in breads.

Always let whole-wheat bread dough rise to the top of the baking pan. Whole-wheat dough will not spring much in the oven.

Use the handle of a wooden spoon to push at least four holes in your loaf of whole-wheat bread. Push the holes (from the top to the bottom) in the loaves before you let the dough rise. This will insure proper texture.

Wash the top of your whole-wheat bread with salad oil before you let the dough rise. This will keep the top crust tender.

Remove the loaves from their pans as soon as you take them from the oven. Let the loaves completely cool on a wire rack before slicing.

BREAD FINISHING AND STORING:

Wash the top of hot freshly baked bread with melted butter or margarine. The crust will be softer and full of flavor.

Cool bread as quickly as possible, on raised wire racks. Always avoid sitting loaves in a draft.

Remove bread from the baking pan immediately upon taking the it from the oven.

Bread rolls are best if they are removed from the oven when the crust is very light brown. Finish baking them just before serving.

Freeze bread loaves and rolls as soon as they are cool. Freezing is the best way to store breads, even for only a few days.

INGREDIENTS FOR BREAD BAKING

I. FLOUR: Use only flour that is labeled BREAD FLOUR. All-purpose flour will make rich bread rolls, but will not give you good results with loaves. Any crusty type breads, such

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as French bread, **MUST** have bread flour to make a correct loaf or roll.

II. **SUGAR:** Use honey, granulated sugar, corn syrup or molasses to sweeten bread. A little sweetener will act as a food for yeast and give your bread greater volume. Sugar will also cause bread to brown quickly. Use small amounts of sweetener in crusty type breads.

III. **MILK:** Milk or milk powder will give your bread flavor, act as a yeast food (milk contains a form of sugar) and cause bread to brown quickly. Use small amounts of milk in crusty type breads.

IV. **YEAST:** Yeast comes in active, dry and dry instant forms. All are good to use in your breads. Active yeast must be fresh. When active yeast is gray or feels like putty, throw it away. Dry yeast must be dissolved in warm water before use. Dry instant yeast (best) can be added to your mix and no special care is necessary. Be sure to read the label on dry yeast to learn if it is instant.

V. **SHORTENING:** All-purpose shortening (**HYDROGENATED**) is best to use in bread. You may use margarine, butter, salad oil or olive oil, but because they have different effects on breads you should use them carefully. Use very little shortening in crusty type breads. Shortening will make them soft.

VI. **SALT:** Salt is an important flavor ingredient in breads.

VII. **WATER:** Water should always be cool. In the summer months, water should be very cold. Usually the other ingredients you add will be at room temperature and they may be warmer than desired. Ice cold water will keep the dough from overheating while mixing.

VIII. **NUTS:** Nut-meats, raisins, dates, seeds, etc. should be added to the dough after it has finished mixing. Kneading nut-meats into the dough by hand is best. Whole wheat germ and bran can be added with the flour.

IX. **EGGS:** Use whole fresh eggs in most type breads, however in crusty type breads use only egg whites. Egg yolks contain a high percentage of fat and will cause crusty type breads to be soft. Eggs should always be fresh. The egg's size is very important. When the recipe doesn't say — use large eggs. Frozen eggs come in 4 packages; whole eggs, egg whites, 2 yolks to 1 white, and sugar yolks. If you use frozen eggs the kind that comes 2 yolks to 1 white is best. Whole eggs are second best. I write **WHOLE EGGS** in the formula, but if you use eggs with 2 yolks to 1 white it will be a better product.

X. **LEMON JUICE:** Lemon juice in very small amounts will give breads a slightly sour taste. This is especially good in French bread and rolls. Add a little with the water.

XI. **OLIVE OIL:** Use Olive oil to grease your pans. Lightly coat the inside of the baking pan and then wash the top of the loaf with olive oil.

XII. **ONIONS:** Dehydrated onions are great to use in bread rolls. Add water and let them plump, then drain off the excess water and knead them into your favorite dough.

XIII. **CHEESE:** Parmesan cheese and garlic salt is very good sprinkled on the top of French bread sticks.

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XIV. PEPPER: Use (dustless) black pepper when your recipe calls for black pepper.

XV. SPICE: Use Rosemary, Oregano leaves and Fennel seed (whole or ground) for Italian breads or pizza crusts.

YEAST INFORMATION:

Yeast is a one celled microorganism of the fungus type. Its enzyme action converts certain fermentable sugars and some of the starch present in dough into carbon dioxide gas and alcohol. Fermentation converts sucrose (cane or beet sugar) into simpler sugars such as invert sugars (dextrose or levulose) and then into alcohol and carbon dioxide gas.

The average composition of yeast:

Proteins 14%

Carbohydrates 10%

Fat .5%

Mineral matter 2.3%

Moisture 68 to 73%

Enzymes and vitamins (trace)

Yeast should always be stored at 32o to 34o F. and used fresh. Old yeast will not have the potency to produce the desired yield in the product. All yeast (fresh and dry) should be mixed in a slurry of water at the beginning of the mixing cycle. Salt (and some spices such as cinnamon) should never come into direct contact with the yeast slurry. Flour should be used as a buffer between yeast and salt (cinnamon).

Using the correct amount of yeast in bread dough:

High sugar content—use more yeast

Low sugar content—use less yeast

High shop temperature—use less yeast

Cool shop temperature—use more yeast

High soluble material—use more yeast

Low soluble material—use less yeast

Mixing Times:

Mixing times have a direct effect on leavening of the product. Yeast, baking powder and baking soda cannot do their jobs if the mixing times are not correct.

Breads:

The formation of flour gluten traps the carbon dioxide gas formed by yeast in a bread product. Proper mixing time, temperature and moisture are necessary to have strong and elastic gluten. Under or over mixing will destroy the gluten's ability to trap the carbon dioxide gas produced by yeast and the product will be undesirable.

Cake Baking

A moist, beautifully frosted cake is the crown jewel of baking accomplishments. The art of baking perfect cakes is still the highest achievement of baking technique.

Premix cakes are very good, but are also expensive and require much of the same baking knowledge as baking from scratch. You must always carefully follow each step of the formula's directions. Your baking environment is different from anyone else's. Your oven will bake differently, your mixer will mix differently, the temperature of the pre-mix ingredients or your fresh ingredients will be different. Even the humidity of your kitchen will be different. You are unique and because of your being unique, the problems you face will be different from anyone else's.

Cake baking isn't difficult, it just demands close attention to each detail of the project. Cake baking technique is not forgiving, when you make a mistake ... the project is ruined. Read the formula's methods of ingredient combination carefully, think positively, throw in a handful of common sense and you will make perfectly baked cakes time after time.

Many bakers make cake from premixed ingredients which will produce excellent cakes. When using a batter made from a premix you will find my methods of preparation, baking tips, icing tips, and cake handling tips to be of value.

Using premixed ingredients saves a little time and reduces the needed skill level as far as scaling and mixing goes. However, all the other parts of cake handling is exactly the same as making from scratch. Using my suggestions will save you time and money no matter which form of mixing you chose.

YOUR OVENS

Ovens have a tendency to have wide swings in the temperature they hold. When they are heating up, the temperature may rise several degrees past the setting. When they reach the setting, the heat source turns off. The time they are actually heating, at the required setting, will vary with how well the oven is insulated. Each time the oven automatically turns on and off signals a swing in temperature which is different from what you pre-set. A setting of 350, or 360, or 370 degrees may result in a perfect average between heating and cooling periods.

The way to know your oven's perfect average is to experiment. Experimenting is time consuming, but once you know, everything you bake will be better because of your effort.

Set your oven at 350 degrees and heat for about twenty minutes. Use a premix box of white cake or scratch and mix according to directions. Fill a round cake pan with the suggested amount of batter. Place the cake into the oven on the center shelf and in the center of the oven. Bake for the suggested amount of time. The only variable will be the baking temperature.

At the end of the suggested time, remove the first layer from the oven and let it cool. While the layer is cooling, turn the oven up to 360 degrees and wait 15 minutes to heat. Place a second layer in the oven and again bake for the suggested time. At the end of the suggested time, remove the second layer from the oven and turn the oven up to 370 degrees. Wait 15 minutes to heat, then place a third layer in and bake for the suggested time. Remove the third layer after the suggested time and let all three layers cool.

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Cut each layer in half and place them side by side. Which layer is the most perfect? If the layer baked at 370 degrees is the best, and the directions recommended baking at 365 degrees, you should add 5 degrees to the directions or recipe's suggested baking temperature when baking any kind of cake in the future. If the layer baked at 350 degrees is the best, you should subtract 15 degrees from the suggested temperature in any future pre-mix directions or scratch mix recipes.

Note: Try to keep each of the unbaked layers as cool as possible (without putting them in the refrigerator).

CAKE MIXING

Make sure all the mixing utensils are clean and cool.

Use the beaters designed for cake mixing on your mixer.

Make sure that all your measuring cups and spoons actually hold the same volume -- when you are using more than one set. Fill one measuring cup up to the one-cup line then pour that water into the other measuring cup to make sure they both hold the same volume. Measure all ingredients as accurately as possible.

Always use ice cold water in the mix unless the directions or the recipe reads differently.

Follow each step of the mixing procedure as faithfully as you can. Shortcuts almost always lead to disaster.

Follow mixing times to the letter. Under or over mixing is probably the number one cause of cake failure.

Angel food cake must be mixed and baked in a fat free environment. A drop or two of oil in the mix or on the cake pan will ruin your cake. Always invert Angel food cake as soon as the cake comes from the oven.

Place the layers in the oven as soon as possible after mixing. Baking powder and baking soda start working at once, so get the cake in the oven quickly.

Use a rubber or soft plastic spatula to scrape the sides of the mixing bowl after each addition of ingredients. Scraping down the bowl is a must to insure proper ingredient distribution.

Always cream the sugar and shortening the correct amount of time. Good creaming will insure that plenty of air is added to the batter and that your liquids will blend with the other ingredients.

BAKING CAKES

Pre-set your oven about twenty minutes before baking. When the oven reaches your pre-set temperature, use a small oven thermometer to make sure the setting is correct.

Season all your new baking pans by applying a very thin coat of vegetable oil and baking them empty for about 25 minutes at 400 degrees. Cool completely, wipe dry, LIGHTLY grease them with all-purpose shortening and LIGHTLY dust them with flour before using.

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When you use a spray release agent on your pans, make sure that for cakes the spray DOES contain flour.

When you use a spray release agent on your pans that does not contain flour, dust with flour after using the spray.

Cakes that contain large percentages of sugar and milk will brown quickly. Bake this type of cake at a lower temperature than usual.

Most ovens have a tendency to bake hot or have hot spots. Consider using a slightly lower temperature than the recipe calls for when setting your oven.

Baking pans that are coated with a dark built-in release coating will sometimes burn cakes on their bottoms before they are done. Use a lower oven temperature when you use this kind of pan or sit each pan on a baking sheet.

Oven temperature is critical for cake baking. When possible, bake a small amount of cake batter in a cupcake liner when you bake each particular cake the first time. A perfectly baked cupcake will usually mean that your temperature setting is correct. Most cakes should never be baked lower than 350 degrees and never higher than 375 degrees. A temperature setting of 365 degrees is a good place to start and if your oven is accurate, will probably do fine. Always use a pan of the proper size to bake cake. Check your recipe for the recommended size.

Try to always bake in the center (of the center rack) when possible. Do not let the cake pans touch each other or the sides of the oven.

Do not open the oven door until the minimum baking time has passed.

Test for doneness by inserting a wooden pick in the center of the cake layer. If the pick is dry, remove the cake. If the pick is wet or sticky, let the cake bake for five more minutes then test again. An experienced baker can test for doneness by lightly touching the center of the layer. When the cake springs back to the touch, it is done.

Let the cake layers cool five or ten minutes in the pans before inverting on a wire rack to finish cooling.

GENERAL TIPS ON CAKES

Cake/Icing combinations are endless. Bring them together the way you like and you can't go wrong.

Cool cake layers completely before icing. Use a sharp knife and cut away humps and high sides. The layers should be fairly level before applying the icing.

Cool cake layers completely in a draft free place, wrap air-tight and freeze for the best storage. Do not unwrap the layers until they are completely thawed. Never ice layers until they have completely thawed.

Lightly brush any loose crumbs from the top and sides before icing.

When icing a cake, place the first layer bottom side up (add the icing), then place the second layer top side up for a perfect match in the middle.

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Make a small portion of icing extra wet (add a little extra water). Ice the entire cake with a very thin coating of this wet icing to set the crumbs and fill any gaps. Follow up by icing the cake as usual.

Buy a special icing spatula and use it to spread icing on your cake layers. They will have a professional look.

Store cakes that have been iced with boiled type icing under a cake dome that is lifted slightly by using a wooden pick. Don't plan on this type icing lasting more than a day or two.

Store cakes that have been iced with a buttercream type icing under a sealed cake dome. They will last several days.

Brush (warm) uniced cake layers liberally with a hot simple syrup mixture or with hot jelly to make them extremely moist tasting. Split thick layers and brush each one.

PROBLEMS WITH CAKES

PROBLEM: Cake batter that runs over the pan.

Either the oven was set very low or you put too much batter in the pan. Check your oven setting and never fill the baking pan more than 1/2 full of cake batter. Excess baking powder will cause the batter to run over the pan, so measure carefully.

PROBLEM: Cake is dry.

The oven was probably set too low and the cake dried out as it baked. Cool cakes in a draft free area. They will dry out quickly in a draft.

PROBLEM: Cakes that are soggy and fallen in the middle.

Your ingredients are out of proper balance. Make sure that you measure correctly. Excess shortening, liquid or sugar will cause this problem.

Problem: Cakes are burned on one side.

Improper placement in the oven will cause cakes to bake faster on one side. Gently rotate the cake pans (don't pick up the pans, spin them) about 2/3 into the baking time for an even bake.

PROBLEM: What are the most common cake problems and causes?

The following list covers just about all common cake problems and what caused them to happen.

IF YOUR CAKE FALLS: Your oven was probably not hot enough. You under-mixed the batter. You didn't let the layers finish baking. You opened the door during baking and then shut it hard, jarring the cake inside. You used too much baking powder, baking soda, liquid, or sugar.

IF YOUR CAKE CRACKS AND IS CRUMBLY: You probably used too much shortening, baking powder, or sugar. You may have taken the cake from the pan before it had cooled enough. The layers may have needed a little extra baking time.

IF YOUR CAKE PEAKS IN THE MIDDLE: You probably used too much flour or too little liquid. Your

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oven temperature may have been too hot. Check the temperature with a small thermometer, one that's made for ovens.

IF YOUR CAKE STICKS TO THE PAN: You may have not greased and floured the pan enough. You probably let the layers cool too long in the pan before trying to remove them. Not baked long enough.

IF YOUR CAKE'S CRUST IS SHINY AND STICKY: Your oven may be baking too cool. Check the temperature with an oven thermometer. You may have removed the layers from the oven too soon. You probably have used too much sugar in the recipe.

IF YOUR CAKE'S TEXTURE IS TOO COARSE: You may have used too much baking powder. Your oven temperature may have been set too low. You used all-purpose flour instead of cake flour. You probably under mixed the sugar and shortening.

IF YOUR CAKE'S TEXTURE IS TOO DRY: You may have left the layers in the oven too long and they over baked. You may have beaten your egg whites too long. You may have added more flour than the recipe called for. You may have added less shortening or liquid than the recipe called for. You may have left out some of the sugar.

HERE IS A QUICK TOUR OF CAKE PROBLEMS AND CURES:

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Crust too Dark ---- Causes:
Oven too hot.
Excessive top heat.

Cakes too Small ---- Causes:
Scaling weight too low.
Oven temperature too high.
Batter temperature too high.
Batter temperature too low.
Incorrect amount of water.

Cakes burnt on top ---- Causes:
Oven temperature too hot.
Incorrect amount of water.

Crust too thick ---- Causes:
Excessive baking time.

Cake falls during baking ---- Causes:
Excessive jarring or moving of the cake during baking.
Oven temperature too low. Excessive mixing of the batter.

Cake shrinking ---- Causes:
Excessive liquid.
Batter too cold.
Oven too hot.
Improper mixing procedure.

Baked too long.

INTERNAL APPEARANCE

Coarse and Irregular Grain ---- Causes:

Improper mixing procedures.

Stiff Batter.

Careless or poor depositing in the pans.

Oven too cool, (baked too slowly).

Dense Grain ---- Causes:

Excessive liquid in the batter.

Improper mixing procedure.

Off Color Cakes ---- Causes:

Improper mixing procedure.

Oven too cool, (baked too slowly).

Unclean equipment.

GENERAL CAKE FAULTS

Poor flavor ---- Causes:

Improper mixing procedure.

Improper cleaning and greasing of the pans.

Faulty baking conditions.

Improper cleaning of the equipment.

Cakes too Tough ---- Causes:

Excessive mixing.

Batter too stiff (insufficient water).

Batter too thin (excessive water).

Lack of Body ---- Causes:

Excessive Mixing.

Insufficient Liquid.

Poor keeping Quality ---- Causes:

Excessive baking time.

Insufficient Liquid.

Improper mixing procedures.

Cooled in a drafty location.

PRODUCTION HINTS FOR CAKES

BAKING:

Bake cakes at 350 to 360 degrees in regular oven.

Bake cakes at 330 to 335 degrees in convection oven.

Handle the cakes carefully when removing from the oven.

Make sure the batter is level in the pans.

Cakes will spring back, when touched, when they are done.

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Baking time will vary with pan size and batter weight.

MIXING:

Batter temperature should be 70 to 75 degrees.
ALL equipment should be clean and grease free.
Pans should be greased properly.
Use a paddle (not a wire whip) to mix the batter.
Follow the formula exactly as to mixing times.
Add liquid to the mix in (stages).
Always use fresh, high quality ingredients.
Follow the formula exactly as to method.

HANDLING:

Turn hot cakes out gently.
Cool completely then wrap for freezing.
Make only enough to last 3 or 4 days.

Helpful Tips With Cakes

YELLOW CAKE:

Yellow cake is an old fashion cake that is noted for its moisture and flavor. Yellow cake has a fairly loose crumb and makes excellent layers, sheets and cupcakes. Yellow cake lends itself to be a perfect compliment for fruits such as strawberries and bananas. Yellow cake is also great with cream filling between the layers. Fresh fruit filling combined with a whipped cream icing makes yellow cake a special treat.

TIPS ON YELLOW CAKE:

Oven temperature is critical for yellow cake baking. Make sure that your oven's internal temperature is correct.

Chill your fresh baked yellow cake in the refrigerator, then slice the layers in half. Make your yellow layer cakes four thin layers instead of two thick ones. You can add more fruit or icing and the cake will be more moist.

Yellow cake dries out fast. Let the layers cool in a draft free place and ice them as soon as possible.

All-purpose flour is good to use in yellow cake when you plan to serve with fruit or cream filling. When your yellow cake must stand alone with only icing, then cake flour is best to use.

Boxed yellow cake mixes are excellent. Add an extra egg yolk or a tablespoon of vegetable oil to give them a little extra moisture.

Yellow cake is flavorful in itself, so use only a little vanilla extract in the mix.

HOLIDAY FRUITCAKE:

Fruitcake is America's traditional Christmas gift. A good fruitcake has very little cake batter and is full of nuts and quality fruits. Fruitcake must be moist and must retain moisture. Fruitcake is traditionally baked in a ring form.

The quality of most commercially made fruitcake is a far cry from the old fashion traditional cake.

TIPS ON FRUITCAKE:

Follow the directions in making the fruitcake listed in this book and you can not go wrong. These formulas have proven themselves time and again to be the best there is.

The apricot and pineapple (fruitcake type of cake) are also super good and are proven sellers. Try them all and they will make you money.

ANGEL FOOD CAKES:

Angel Food cake is the lightest of all cakes. They are low in calories and have no cholesterol. They are characteristically baked in a special ring Angel cake pan. Angel Food cakes lend

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themselves to being served with all sorts of fresh fruits. Strawberries, peaches, blueberries and cherries are deliciously complimented by Angel Food cake. A dollop of whipped cream makes fruit and Angel Food cake a very special dessert.

TIPS ON ANGEL FOOD CAKE:

A tiny amount of shortening or salad oil in the baking pan or on any mixing utensils will bring disaster to your Angel Food cake. The mix will not tolerate any sort of oil. Anything that touches your Angel Food cake batter must be washed in hot soapy water, rinsed in hot clean water and thoroughly dried.

Boxed Angel Food cake mixes are good, but will produce a different texture than an Angel Food cake made from scratch. Try both ways and choose the way you like the best.

Baking time is critical for Angel Food cakes. A little under bake will cause the cake to pull itself from the sides of its baking pan and fall. A little over bake will cause the cake to stick fast to its pan and become tough. Bake your Angel Food cake until the top is golden brown and is not sticky.

Always invert the Angel cake pan as soon as it is removed from the oven. A glass bottle makes a good stand to hold the Angel Food cake pan. If the cake touches a wire rack, it may fall. However, with some boxed cake mixes, cooling on a wire rack is fine.

Add vanilla extract and a little almond extract to your Angel Food cake batter. The almond extract will provide a good background flavor.

Gently push down around the sides and stem of the Angel Food cake pan before tapping the cake out.

If you like a darker crust on your Angel Food cake, wet the Angel Food cake pan with cool water before filling with batter.

TIPS ON WHITE CAKE:

Cream part of the cake flour with the shortening (one half or more of the required flour). This will make the cake hold moisture.

Using all-purpose flour will cause white cake to be moist, but it will also have a clumpy grain and a slight off color.

Using cake type flour is best for white cake. Cake flour will give it the proper grain and crumb color.

Try using a 50/50 mixture of all-purpose flour and cake flour when making a white POUND cake. All-purpose flour will make white pound cake more moist and will give it a texture that will be acceptable for pound cake.

Add a little almond extract along with vanilla extract. Use only a drop or two of almond extract because this extract is much stronger than vanilla and will make an excellent background flavor.

Use ice cold water to mix white cake, whether using a box cake mix or from scratch. Proper

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texture and moisture retention depends on using cold water.

When using a spray release agent on cake pans, make sure the spray DOES contain flour.

When using a spray release agent that does NOT contain flour, dust the pans with flour after spraying.

Baking temperature is critical for white cake. Pre-set the oven temperature about 20 minutes before baking. Make sure the oven's temperature setting reading is really the correct temperature. Large white cake units bake at about 350 degrees while smaller units (such as cupcakes) should bake at about 365 degrees. Check the temperature with an oven thermometer.

Heavy steel or glass pans are best for baking white cake. Light weight pans may cause the crust to brown before the middle is done. Pans coated with a dark non-stick coating will bake faster than those without a coating or those with a light colored coating. Cakes that contain large percentages of sugar and milk will brown quickly. Bake this type of cake at a lower temperature than usual. White cake at about 350 degrees.

Remove white cake from the oven when the crust is golden brown and the cake's center springs back to the touch.

Turn the cake out on a dusted (1/3 granulated sugar to 2/3 bread flour) paper as soon as they are removed from the oven. If the bottoms stick to the pan, bake for a few minutes longer. If the cakes are allowed to set in the pans too long, they may also stick to the bottom of the cake pan.

Cool cake layers completely in a draft free place, wrap air-tight and freeze for the best storage. Do not unwrap the layers until they are completely thawed. Never ice layers until they have completely thawed.

Large layers of white cake (for weddings, etc.) are best when left covered at a cool room temperature or placed in the refrigerator over-night. Icing is much easier.

Chill white cake before icing. Rub any loose crumbs from the chilled layers and trim the cake level. Place the cut sides DOWN as the layers are stacked.

Suggested icing for white cake: Boiled icing (with or without coconut), White buttercream, Chocolate buttercream, Fruit flavored buttercream.

Brush room temperature unfrosted cake layers liberally with a hot simple syrup mixture or with hot jelly to make an extremely moist tasting. Split thick layers.

Make a small portion of icing extra wet (add a little extra water). Ice the entire cake with a very thin coating of this wet icing to set the crumbs and fill any gaps. Follow up by icing the cake as usual.

Store cakes that have been iced with boiled type icing under a cake dome that is lifted slightly by using a wooden pick. Don't plan on this type icing lasting more than a day or two.

Store cakes that have been iced with a buttercream type icing under a sealed cake dome. They will last several days.

CAKE AND ICING COMBINATIONS:

WHITE CAKE:

Layers: (2)

Ice with White buttercream.

Ice with White buttercream with Nuts on the sides.

Ice with White buttercream with fruit concentrates added; Banana, cherry, orange, strawberry, pineapple, raspberry.

Ice with White buttercream with flake coconut pressed on the top and sides.

Ice with Fruit Spreads such as cherry, apricot, pineapple, orange, raspberry, lemon; alone, or covered with nuts/coconut.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream on the sides with dark chocolate fondant type icing on top.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream on the sides with fruit spread on top.

Ice with Boiled Icing.

Ice with Boiled Icing and cover with coconut pressed on the top and sides.

Ice with White Fondant type icing alone or with flavors.

Sheets and Cupcakes:

Ice with buttercream.

Ice with buttercream sprinkled with nuts/coconut.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream sprinkled with nuts/coconut.

Ice with White or Chocolate fondant type icing, alone or with flavors.

DEVILS FOOD CHOCOLATE CAKE:

Layers: (2)

Ice with White buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream with nuts pressed on the sides.

Ice with Dark Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream on the sides and Dark Chocolate Fondant Icing on the top.

Ice with White Boiled Icing.

Sheets and Cupcakes:

Ice with White buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Chocolate buttercream with nuts sprinkled on top.

Ice with White Boiled icing.

SPONGE CAKE:

Layers: (2) cut in half.

Ice with Lemon Spread between the layers and lemon fondant on the sides and top.

Ice with Fruit spreads; apricot, cherry, raspberry, apricot; between the layers and on top.

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Chopped nuts/coconut pressed around the sides.

Ice with whipping cream, with Strawberry filling (fresh) between the layers.

Place Vanilla Cream filling between a single split layer and Chocolate Cream filling on top.

Ice the sides with Vanilla Cream filling and press on chopped nuts.

GERMAN CHOCOLATE CAKE:

Layers: (2)

Ice with German Chocolate Icing.

Ice with Dark Fudge, fondant icing. Split the layers and place the icing between them, on the sides, and on the top.

Ice with White boiled icing.

RED VELVET CAKE:

Layers: (2)

Ice with Cream Cheese Icing.

GERMAN CHOCOLATE MADE FROM RED VELVET CAKE:

Ice with German Chocolate Icing.

Ice with Light Chocolate buttercream.

Ice with Special (rich) chocolate icing.

Ice with Cream Cheese Icing with chopped nuts pressed around the sides.

Ice with White buttercream and press coconut around the sides.

RUM CAKE:

Ring:

Dip in Rum Syrup.

Loaf:

Plain.

Cupcakes:

Ice with buttercream, Chocolate, White, or colored white.

BANANA CAKE:

Ice with Banana flavored buttercream and press pecan pieces on the sides.

Place Vanilla custard with fresh sliced bananas between the layers. Ice with whipping cream.

Sprinkle with Pecans.

ANGEL FOOD:

No icing.

Ice with Boiled icing.

Ice with Cherry flavored buttercream, or Boiled icing.

Ice with Light Chocolate buttercream and press chopped almonds on the sides.

Ice with whipping cream to which you have added fresh chopped strawberries, or peaches.

APPLE SAUCE CAKE:

Ice with Honey Spice icing.
Ice with Whipped Cream. Sprinkle chopped nuts on top.
Ice with Chocolate buttercream.

CHEESE CAKE:

Top with sour cream and sprinkle cinnamon.
Top with fruit pie filling.
Top with almond filling.

CHOCOLATE APPLESAUCE CAKE:

Ice with white fondant type icing.

CHOCOLATE CAKE:

Ice with chocolate or white buttercream.
Ice with chocolate flavored whipping cream and decorate with shaved chocolate and cherries.
Ice with boiled icing.

CHOCOLATE VELVET CAKE:

Ice with whipped cream and decorate with shaved chocolate.

GINGER BREAD CAKE:

Ice with Honey spice icing.
No icing, sprinkle with powdered sugar.
Serve with whipping cream.

GOLD CAKE:

Ice with White buttercream.
Ice with Boiled icing.
Ice with Chocolate buttercream.
Ice with Whipping Cream.
Ice with Honey Spice icing.
Decorate with chopped nuts, cherry halves, shaved chocolate, whole pecan halves, or flake coconut.

LEMON POUND CAKE:

No icing, apply a sauce.
Ice with Lemon fondant type icing.

ORANGE CHIFFON CAKE:

Ice with Orange glaze.
No icing.

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Ice with orange flavored buttercream.
Ice with Chocolate glaze.

PUMPKIN CAKE:

Ice with Honey Spice icing.

PECAN FUDGE CAKE:

Ice with Chocolate Fondant type Icing. Press pecan pieces on the sides.
Ice with boiled icing and sprinkle chopped nuts on the top.
Ice with Chocolate buttercream, Drizzle hot chocolate fondant over the top.

SPICE CAKE:

Ice with Honey Spice icing. Decorate with chopped nuts.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKES:

SUGAR: Super fine or Fine granulated sugar is best for cakes.

SHORTENING: All-purpose shortening is good. Butter is good. Emulsified shortening is best. Emulsified shortening blends best with the sugar and holds moisture in the cake. Use emulsified shortening **ONLY** in cakes and icings. Emulsified shortening should never be used in other baked items or used to fry donuts.

EGGS: Always use fresh whole eggs. When you use yolks and not the egg white, separate them carefully and use the whites in meringue or icing. Do not let part of the egg yolk get into the egg whites. Egg yolk contains a lot of fat and fat will cause Angel Food cake to collapse. Also, make sure the container you put the egg whites in is free from any form of fat, oil or shortening.

Eggs should always be fresh. The egg's size is very important. When the recipe doesn't say -- use large eggs. Frozen eggs come in 4 packages; whole eggs, egg whites, 2 yolks to 1 white, and sugar yolks. If you use frozen eggs the kind that comes 2 yolks to 1 white is best. Whole eggs are second best. I write **WHOLE EGGS** in the formula, but if you use eggs with 2 yolks to 1 white it will be a better product.

FLOUR: Use Cake flour in making almost all kinds of cakes. All-purpose flour is fine for some fruitcakes, but will cause most cakes to be grainy. When an all-purpose flour is all you have, try adding a level teaspoon of corn starch for each cup of all-purpose flour. The corn starch will weaken the flour enough to make a good cake.

You can also substitute all-purpose flour for cake flour by using 2 tablespoons less per cup. (This is definitely not as good as using cake flour, but will do.)

SALT: Salt is an important flavor ingredient in cakes, but use only a small amount.

BAKING SODA: Make sure that your baking soda is fresh. Baking soda picks up odors and will ruin the taste of your cake.

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BAKING POWDER: Make sure that your baking powder is fresh. Baking powder loses strength with age and will ruin your cake. When in doubt -- buy fresh.

COCOA: Cocoa will absorb odors. Make sure that the cocoa you use is fresh. Push through a sifter if lumpy.

BUTTER: Butter goes rancid quickly and will also pick up odors. Make sure that you only use fresh, tightly wrapped butter in your cake mix. Let the butter get a little soft before using, but do not let separate. Butter should be cool, but not cold when you blend with the other ingredients.

WATER: Use ice cold water in all your cake mixing, whether from scratch or from a boxed premix. Ice cold water will keep the baking powder strong until the cake goes into the oven. Ice cold water will chill the shortening and keep the shortening from breaking down in the creaming process.

MILK: Milk and milk products give the cake flavor, cause your cake to brown and helps hold moisture. Use fresh milk, buttermilk and milk powder in your cake mixing.

OIL: Some recipes call for salad oil. You should always make sure the oil is fresh. All oil goes slightly rancid in time and will pick up odors.

VANILLA EXTRACT: Vanilla is the primary flavoring for cakes, use plenty.

ALMOND EXTRACT: Almond extract gives the taste of cherries. Use a LITTLE Almond extract along with Vanilla to perk up white cake and white icing.

ORANGE EXTRACT: The taste of Orange extract compliments chocolate perfectly. Add a LITTLE Orange extract along with Vanilla to perk up chocolate cake and chocolate icing.

NUT-MEATS: Nut-meats enhance all kinds of cakes, but always make sure they are fresh.

CORN OIL, MARGARINE, WHIPPED BUTTER, WHIPPED MARGARINE OR ANY LOW CALORIE MARGARINE: Never substitute these in your recipe. They require special recipe changes that takes a lot of experimenting.

COCONUT: Use fresh, moist coconut in your cake and icing. Freshen up a package of dry coconut by putting with a couple of tablespoons of water in a quart jar and shaking.

Baking Cookies

The information below covers many of the basic features about making cookies. Whether you bake from scratch or use mixes or frozen dough, the basic information below will help you do it better.

Mixing cookies:

Mixing cookies has come a long way since the days of a big mixing bowl and a wooden spoon. Proper preparation will make the mixing process go smoothly and quickly.

* Check your recipe and assemble all the ingredients you will need. Crack eggs or weigh them before you do anything else. Mix dry milk with water and have it ready. Chop nuts if needed and measure or weigh them. Make sure you have enough of each ingredient before you start mixing. The mixing process should flow from from one stage to the next to finish without interruption. Many scratch made cookies have the same basic mixing instructions.

Cream the sugar and shortening together well.

Add the eggs and/or other liquid. Then scrape down the sides of the mixing bowl.

Mix the eggs in slightly.

Add the dry ingredients, nuts, chips and the extracts (flavors)

Mix to incorporate thoroughly. Do not over mix the dough.

The tips below will help you make a variety of cookies:

* When your cookie dough mixture is dry, add an egg yolk instead of water. Water makes a dough tough. The fat content of an egg yolk will keep the dough tender and its emulsifying action will help keep it moist after baking.

* When using a package mix, follow the directions on the package and if the cookies come out perfect continue to do so. However, since your kitchen environment is unique you may need to make changes in your mixing times, baking times or oven temperature. Directions are used as a starting place to doing things correctly and sometimes must be changed to make cookies the way you like them.

* Crumbly cookies may be caused by over mixing the batter. Cream the shortening and sugar together, add liquids and then carefully mix in flour, fruit, chips and nut-meats. Over mixing the flour will cause crumbly cookies. Care should also be taken to use only cool liquids. Mixing generates heat from bowl friction. Heat may melt the shortening and most certainly will cause the baking powder or baking soda to begin its chemical action.

* Dry, hard cookies are caused by over mixing the batter, over baking, dry fruit/coconut, too much water or a lack of fat. Excessive salt can also cause your cookies to be hard.

* Duplication of other people's baking is very difficult. Invariably they do things to the recipe that is not written down. A little extra vanilla, or even a change in mixing time will make a noticeable difference in the finished cookie. Also, their oven will always have different baking characteristics than yours. You must first pinpoint the differences between your cookies and theirs. Then you must make the changes in the recipe to offset the difference. You must determine by crust color, taste or texture where theirs is different. Crust color being lighter or darker will usually mean a difference in oven temperature or baking time.

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Taste difference will signal a need for more or less flavoring or spice. Texture difference can mean either baking time or mixing procedure.

The most important thing to remember about baking anything, is that a recipe should only be used as a guide. Make your cookies the way you like.

* Use the same measuring cups and spoons to measure ingredients. Measuring cups and spoons will sometime differ slightly in the amount they hold. Measuring cups with smooth lips are for measuring dry ingredients. Measuring cups with a pouring spout are for measuring liquids.

Baking cookies:

Whether making your cookies from scratch or from a mix, correct baking is essential.

Proper preparation before baking and knowing the properties of your oven will greatly increase the chances of baking wonderful cookies. Your baking process should flow from the makeup process and become a part of it. Cookies should be baking, others cooling while you are filling pans with raw dough.

- * Have baking pads or mitts ready for handling hot pans.
- * Have cooling racks ready and a convenient place to put them.
- * Acquire a timer that signals with a ring and use it to time all your baking.
- * Turn on your oven about twenty minutes before using. The temperature will be more accurate when you start baking.
- * Set your oven at 350 degrees. When the heat shuts off, check the oven's temperature with an oven thermometer.
- * Place the thermometer at different points (front and back) and at different levels (bottom middle, top shelf). The results will let you see how to best bake cookies in your unique oven.
- * Use cookie sheets with low sides. Heat will circulate around them evenly and give you a better bake. Also make sure that there is at least 1 to 2 inches of space around the pan. This will let the oven heat evenly. Make sure that all the cookies on each baking sheet is about the same size.
- * When your recipe reads -- bake for ten minutes; set your timer for eight minutes and check your cookies. Each oven is different. A good baking practice is to check on baking progress. Use a spatula and gently lift a cookie to check the bottom. Cookies continue to bake on the hot sheet after they are removed from the oven. Take cookies out a little early rather than when they are completely done. Establish a minimum and maximum baking time for each type of cookie.
- * Cookies baking too fast on the bottom is usually caused by excessive bottom heat in the oven. Try putting one shelf at the lowest position and cover the shelf with a sheet of aluminum foil or an empty baking sheet. Put the cookie sheet on a shelf half way up in the oven. This will cause the heat to flow more evenly around the cookies and not over bake their bottoms. Use double pans to bake on.

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- * New pans or those coated with a dark release agent will cause cookies to over bake on their bottoms. Double stack, (place one pan inside another) to end this pesky problem.
- * Always season new pans (before using) by applying a thin coat of vegetable oil and placing them in a 400 degree oven for about twenty minutes. Wipe them clean, cool and then prepare the pans as usual for baking.
- * Cookies stick to the baking sheet when the sheet is not properly prepared for baking. Be sure that the sheet is seasoned before using, if new. Do not use detergents for cleaning. Wipe the sheet clean with a lightly greased cloth then wipe with a dry cloth or paper towel.
- * Cool the sheet completely between batches. Putting cookie dough on a hot or warm baking sheet will sometimes cause them to stick. Remove cookies from the baking sheet while they are still warm. Use a spatula when necessary and place them on a wire rack to cool completely.
- * Using parchment paper will prevent your cookies from sticking and keep your cookie sheets clean.
- * If you like soft centered cookies, chill the cookies after placing on the baking sheet. Bake them at a higher temperature than called for, but watch closely. Remove the cookies from the oven when they are light brown.
- * When cutting or bagging cookies; try to make them all the same size. They'll bake evenly that way.
- * Cover cookie dough between baking batches. The dough will dry out quickly and become unworkable. Cookie dough freezes well (6 to 12 months). Wrap tightly and freeze left-overs for next time.
- * Most cookies should bake in ten to twelve minutes. Start with an oven temperature of 350 degrees and go up five degrees until your cookies are baked ten or twelve minutes. Longer baking times will cause the cookies to be dry. Do not overcrowd the cookies on their baking sheet. Let the hot air circulate around each cookie.
- * It is important to make notes and attach them to each cookie recipe that you make. Next time, you'll have the notes to refer to and your baking process will flow much smoother.

Handling and finishing cookies:

- * Finishing your cookies may be the most important part of making them. Eye appeal always heightens taste appeal. Make them pretty!
- * Make your cookies shine by mixing a pinch of salt with a fresh egg. Beat the egg and salt together (only a little), then let the mixture sit for about fifteen minutes. Brush the egg mixture on each cookie before baking. Sprinkle on a little granulated sugar when desired (before baking). Egg wash is a great topping on Short Bread cookies.
- * Lightly toast coconut or oatmeal for use as a topping after the cookie is baked. Lightly brush the cookie with honey or corn syrup to make the coconut stick.
- * Melt chocolate (thin with a few drops of vegetable oil) and dip half the cookie. Place the

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cookie on wax paper and chill only until the chocolate sets up. Serve at room temperature.

- * Cookies freeze well and also will stay fresh when they are sealed in an airtight container.
- * Always wrap cookie dough when storing it in the refrigerator. The baking soda, nuts and chocolate, will pick up odors and ruin the cookie's flavor.
- * Never mix types of baked cookies when storing or packing for gifts. Nuts pick up odors and so does chocolate. When different types of cookies are placed together they all will pick up the dominate odor. Ginger cookies will make all the other cookie types taste like ginger and so on.
- * For holidays or parties, color granulated sugar with a bit of food coloring and sprinkle on unbaked sugar cookies. Lightly press the cookies flat with the bottom of a drinking glass and bake as usual.
- * Use as little flour as possible when rolling out or cutting cookies. The excess flour will d raw moisture from the cookie and also ruin their finished appearance. Use bread type flour for dusting your cookie cutting board. Bread flour will brown quickly and not ruin the cookie's appearance.
- * Freshen up frozen or stored pre-baked cookies by placing them in the oven (300 degrees for 5 minutes) or better yet, place in your microwave for a few seconds.
- * Chocolate chip cookies may have a white haze on the chips and heating in the oven or microwave will make them taste and look like fresh baked.
- * Use high quality jam, not jelly to dot or spread on cookies. Jelly is thin, weak in flavor and not suited for cookies.
- * Sandwich peanut butter or raspberry jam between your Vanilla Wafer cookies for a taste sensation.
- * Lightly toast macaroon coconut to make a super good topping.
- * Use glazed cherries to decorate Butter Wafer cookies or any cookie that needs a splash of color. Place a small piece of the cherry on the top of each cookie before baking. Glazed cherries do not have much flavor, so use almond extract in the cookie dough when you want a cherry taste.
- * Try toasting coconut, nut-meats and oatmeal before adding to the mix. Toasted coconut will give your cookies a new and special flavor.
- * Adding food coloring to coconut will give a festive air to your cookies. Color small amounts of coconut with different liquid food colors, then blend them together before adding to the mix.
- * It is important to make notes and attach them to each cookie recipe that you make. Next time, you'll have the notes to refer to and your finishing process will flow much smoother. A sigh post of great baking is consistency in every thing you bake. Notes will help you keep the things you bake consistent time after time.

Faults in cookies:

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

A. Crust too dark ---- Causes.

Oven temperature too high.

Excessive milk or sugar in the batter.

Poor mixing procedures.

B. Crust too light ----- Causes.

Oven temperature too low.

Excessive liquid in the batter.

Poor mixing procedures.

C. Spreading too much ---- Causes.

Excessive baking soda.

Oven too cool.

Excessive shortening.

Excessive creaming of the mix.

Excessive liquid in the batter.

Excessive sugar (syrup) in the batter.

D. No spreading (lumpy) ---- Causes.

Not enough baking soda.

Too much baking powder.

Oven too hot.

Not enough shortening in the batter.

Not enough sugar (syrup) in the batter.

Insufficient creaming of the mix.

Insufficient liquid.

INTERNAL APPEARANCE

A. Dry and Crumbly ---- Causes:

Excessive baking time.

Improper mixing.

Excessive flour.

Oven temperature too high.

Insufficient sugar (syrup) in the batter.

B. Soft and sticky ----- Causes:

Insufficient baking time.

Improper mixing.

Insufficient flour.

Excessive sugar (syrup) in the batter.

Oven temperature too low.

C. Bad flavor ---- Causes:

Improper mixing procedures.

Too much flavor.

Excessive baking soda or baking powder.

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Improper storage of batter or finished cookies.
Insufficient sugar.

PRODUCTION HINTS

* It is important to make notes and attach them to each cookie recipe that you make. Next time, you'll have the notes to refer to and your processes will flow much smoother. A sign post of great baking is consistency in every thing you bake. Notes will help you keep the things you bake consistent time after time.

BAKING

- * Bake Cookies at 355 to 365 degrees in a regular oven.
- * Bake Cookies at 335 to 345 degrees in a convection oven.
- * Check the bottom of the cookie for correct browning.
- * Cookies continue to bake after removing from the oven. Always remove as browning begins.
- * Cool cookies as quickly as possible.

MIXING

- * Follow the formula mixing procedure exactly.
- * Use cold water.
- * Do not over mix the batter.
- * Measure the baking soda and baking powder exactly.
- * Measure the flavor exactly.
- * Use only clean equipment.

HANDLING

- * Cool and tray as soon as possible.
- * Store each type of cookie in an air tight container.
- * Baking soda, nuts and chocolate will pick up odors, so do not store cookie batter where it may pick up odors.
- * Avoid making the cookie batter until it can be formed and baked. Raw cookie batter will not keep well unless it is refrigerated or frozen immediately after mixing.

PROBLEMS WITH COOKIES

PROBLEM: How to make oatmeal cookies better tasting.

Add a small amount of Cinnamon. Chopped raisins, dates or nut-meats will make Oatmeal cookies taste great.

PROBLEM: Ginger cookies taste strange.

Add a very small amount of ground Clove to the mix. Clove will give your Ginger cookies zest, but don't over do it.

PROBLEM: Chocolate chip cookies taste great when they are fresh baked, but the next day their flavor is gone?

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Warm cookies always taste better than cold ones. Heat releases the flavor of chocolate and nut-meats. Try warming cookies in your microwave oven for a few seconds or in a 300 degree oven for about 5 minutes.

PROBLEM: Sugar cookies get very hard the next day after they are baked. They also taste flat.

Use Cake type flour in the mix and do not press them thin when mashing them out. Press them half way down with your fingers, then sprinkle on a little granulated sugar and finish pressing to a little over one-fourth inch thick with the bottom of a drinking glass. Thin sugar cookies will always bake crisp. Experiment with different thickness until you are satisfied, then make all your sugar cookies that thick.

No matter what the recipe reads, you should always make sugar cookies the way you like. Do not over mix or over bake sugar cookies. Sugar cookies will be very light brown on their bottoms when they are done. If their tops are brown — they are over baked and will be hard.

Double the Vanilla extract called for in your recipe when you want to punch up their flavor.

PROBLEM: What's the best way to store baked cookies?

Wrap cookies tightly, then freeze. They should keep in the freezer for 6 to 12 months. Thaw in their package to room temperature. Heat in a 300 degree oven for 5 minutes or for a few seconds in your microwave.

Cookie dough freezes well (6 to 12 months, when it's wrapped correctly) and the dough takes up less space than baked cookies. Thaw in its package to room temperature, then bake as usual. Bake half a batch and freeze the other half until next time.

PROBLEM: Is it all right to store or freeze different types of cookies together?

They will absorb each others odors and characteristics. Crispy cookies will get soft and soft cookies will dry out. You must always store or freeze each type of cookie separate from any other.

PROBLEM: Can I safely store my cookies uncovered in the refrigerator?

They will absorb odors and moisture.

PROBLEM: Can I use fresh fruit in making cookies?

Using fresh fruit in cookies is difficult. The best way would be to process the fruit into a thick sauce. Substitute the sauce for any water you put in the mix. Example: Fresh apple sauce is much better to use than finely chopped fresh apples.

PROBLEM: I've stored my nut-meats in the refrigerator and they have an off flavor. Is there anything I can do to save them?

No. The oil in nut-meats goes rancid rather quickly and can't be saved once it has gone bad. Nut-meats will also pick up odors that will affect their taste.

Seal tightly for storage and use them as quickly as possible. Freezing nut-meats will protect

them longer than storing in the refrigerator, but it's best to use them quickly.

PROBLEM: I got a little water in my chocolate while it was melting. Now my chocolate is full of lumps, must I throw it away?

No. Stir in one teaspoon of vegetable oil for each ounce of chocolate. This trick may save your chocolate when there is not a lot of moisture in it. Be very careful and avoid getting any moisture in your melting chocolate.

PROBLEM: I tried to melt chocolate morsels in my microwave and they won't melt. I have a lumpy mess. What can I do?

Some brands of chocolate morsels are not pure chocolate. They won't melt well.

Sometime the chocolate morsels are dried out, old or have gathered moisture from being stored in your refrigerator. They won't melt well. Pure chocolate morsels (that are fresh) should melt well in your microwave.

Try adding a teaspoon of oil for each ounce of chocolate. Adding oil may work, but since chocolate morsels can vary somewhat in composition, it may not work. Read the label and buy only pure chocolate morsels.

Tips on specific cookies:

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Chocolate chip cookies are probably the most popular of all cookies. Here are some tips to make them your favorite.

- * Always add the chocolate morsels last to the mix. It's best when they are very cold. Just barely stir the morsels in — don't over mix.
- * Cream the shortening and sugar well. All the rest of the ingredients can be just mixed in, but proper creaming of the shortening and sugar is important.
- * Make sure that your baking pans are cool between cookie batches.
- * Substitute cherry flavored morsels for 1/2 of the chocolate morsels for a new taste treat.
- * Drop your cookies extra thick (use an ice cream scoop), flatten the top a little, then place the cookie sheet in the refrigerator for twenty minutes. Take the sheet from the refrigerator and bake at 375 degrees until the cookie's edges are slightly brown and you will have a soft centered delight.

SUGAR COOKIES, LEMON SUGAR COOKIES:

Sugar cookies are really an old fashion treat that is never out of style.

- * Bake your sugar cookies until they are barely brown around the edges. They will finish baking after they are removed from the oven.
- * Cream your sugar and shortening thoroughly. All the rest of your ingredients should be just mixed in, but good creaming of the sugar and shortening is very important.
- * Add lemon zest and substitute a little lemon juice for part of the water, plus a few drops of yellow food color will give you an excellent lemon sugar cookie.

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES:

- * Always add your peanut butter as the last ingredient to the recipe. It's very easy to over mix peanut butter cookies and they'll be greasy if you do. Mix in the peanut butter only until it is blended.
- * Bake the proper length of time. A little under bake is much better than to over bake peanut butter cookies.
- * Use crunchy peanut butter instead of smooth when you want more peanut flavor.
- * Use plenty of vanilla extract. Vanilla will bring out the peanut butter taste.

OATMEAL COOKIES, OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES:

- * Add raisins with the sugar and mix dry until the raisins are crushed. Add shortening to the mix and cream well together.
- * Add a little cinnamon to bring out the flavor of the oatmeal and the raisins.
- * Use Old Fashion Oatmeal (Three Minute, is okay) in your oatmeal cookies. Instant oatmeal will dissolve and make a heavy cookie.
- * Chopped nut-meats and finely chopped fresh apple is a good addition to oatmeal cookies.
- * Be careful not over bake oatmeal cookies. Less is better. Remember, cookies continue baking after they are removed from the oven.

GINGER SNAP COOKIES:

- * Use only fresh ground ginger spice. Ginger loses flavor with age and should be replaced when you've had it a long time.
- * Bake ginger snaps — well done. When they are under baked they will be soft, but maybe that's ok. They are still delicious.

CHOCOLATE COOKIES:

- * Be careful about over baking chocolate cookies. Since they are already brown, it's hard to tell when they are done.
- * Time your first batch and then add or take away from that time.
- * Add a little black pepper to your chocolate cookies. Sounds strange, but black pepper makes for a new taste twist.
- * Use Dutch Process Cocoa instead of regular cocoa in your chocolate cookies for a new look and taste.

VANILLA WAFER COOKIES:

- * Bag out Vanilla wafer cookies as soon as you have finished mixing them. This batter will not tolerate sitting around.
- * Vanilla wafer cookies must have a good bake. They should be medium brown all over. When vanilla wafer cookies are over baked, they will be hard and crispy, but when they are under baked they will not be good at all.
- * It is important to make notes and attach them to each cookie recipe that you make. Next time, you'll have the notes to refer to and your processes will flow much smoother. A sigh post of great baking is consistency in every thing you bake. Notes will help you keep the things you bake consistent time after time.

Ingredients for cookies:

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A cup of sugar, two of flour, a stick of butter, a couple of eggs, a dash of salt, a teaspoon of baking soda, a little vanillaIngredients to make cookies sound simple enough. But are they?

Once upon a time, sugar was simply sugar, flour was simply flour, and butter was only butter. Eggs are still eggs, but almost everything else has changed — ingredients have gotten better.

We now have a choice of sugars, flours and shortenings. Ingredients are now specialized to suit our baking needs. Granulated sugar, comes in regular grind, fine grind and extra fine grind. We can get all-purpose flour, cake flour, bread flour and several specialized types of flour. Instead of butter we may choose a flavored margarine with no cholesterol or an excellent all-purpose shortening.

Your chance for successful baking has never been better. Your opportunity to create a personal baking masterpiece is almost assured.

A mix package of cookie dough, whether in a bag, box, or frozen in a tube is a mixture of ingredients. Granted, these mixes are great time savers, but they still demand careful preparation in order to be special.

I have listed several tips about ingredients for baking cookies and a little information which is just nice to know.

BAKING POWDER: Baking Powder and Baking Soda will lose its kick with age. Seal it tightly after use to & keep out moisture and odors.

BAKING SODA: Baking soda causes cookies to spread when baked. Baking powder causes cookies to rise and be crunchy.

SUGAR: Cookies are best when a fine-grind granulated sugar is used. Coarse sugar causes cookies to spread excessively and crumble. Powdered sugar causes cookies to be tight-grained and dry.

FLOUR: All-purpose and pastry flour is fine for most cookies. A mixture of one third cake flour to two thirds all-purpose flour is better. Use straight cake flour in your sugar cookies.

SHORTENING: All-purpose shortening or hydrogenated shortening will make almost any cookie. A mixture of three-fourths all-purpose shortening and one-fourth real Butter is better tasting. The butter should be cool, but not hard, when blending with the shortening.

EGGS: Eggs should always be fresh. The egg's size is very important. When the recipe doesn't say — use large eggs. Frozen eggs come in 4 packages; whole eggs, egg whites, 2 yolks to 1 white, and sugar yolks. If you use frozen eggs the kind that comes 2 yolks to 1 white is best. Whole eggs are second best.

SALT: Use very little salt and add at the end of mixing, before the flour is completely mixed in. Salt causes the flour to toughen and can make your cookies tough.

COLORING: Never use excessive food coloring. Some food coloring has a taste and may give your cookies an off flavor.

WATER: Use very cold water in making cookies (unless the recipe reads differently). Cold water

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will help keep the mix from separating. Cold fruit juice is a great substitute for water if you like the fruit flavor.

BROWN SUGAR: Brown sugar frequently gets dry and lumpy. Lumpy brown sugar can be brought back to life by adding a little cold water and either sifted or placed in a blender.

FRUIT: Dried fruit (such as raisins) should be soaked in a bowl of hot water for about ten minutes. This will plump them a little, but will not make them too tender.

NUTS: Nut-meats should always be sampled before using. The oil they contain goes rancid rather quickly and can ruin the taste of your cookies. Nut-meats freeze well and should be stored in the freezer, not in the refrigerator. Nut-meats will absorb odors.

COCONUT: Freshen up coconut by adding a little hot water and tumbling until the water is absorbed.

CHOCOLATE: If you've stored chocolate morsels in the refrigerator and they are covered with a white haze, don't worry, that's normal. However, chocolate will absorb odors and should always be sealed tightly and stored at a cool temperature. Also, chocolate will haze over when allowed to heat over 100 degrees while melting.

Melt chocolate in your microwave when possible. If you must melt it on the stove, use very low heat. Put the chocolate in a bowl, then place the bowl in a pan containing water. You must avoid getting water in your melting chocolate. Water will cause chocolate to lump. When the melted chocolate is very thick, add a small amount of vegetable oil or cocoa butter to thin it down. Never add water to thin melted chocolate.

COCOA: If you like your chocolate cookies more flavorful, add a little more cocoa to the mix. Cocoa will dry the batter out, so you must add a little more shortening or an extra egg yolk. Make a thick paste out of Cocoa and vegetable oil for use in cookie mixes and icing toppings.

SPICE: Use fresh spices in cookies. Spice loses flavor with age and can sometimes taste like something else altogether. Remember, a little spice goes a long way.

VANILLA EXTRACT: Use plenty of Vanilla extract. Extracts are alcohol based and much of the flavor may bake out in the oven.

ALMOND EXTRACT: Use Almond extract along with Vanilla extract to make cherry cookies taste like cherries.

ORANGE EXTRACT: A little Orange extract added to a chocolate cookie gives it a special flavor. Don't be afraid to experiment with flavors. Always use a little and build the flavor up.

Icing Techniques And Tricks

Making delicious icing is a snap. Perfect icing gives cakes, brownies and cookies the special fancy 'sizzle' that makes their selling easy.

Buttercream icing is a mixture of butter, margarine or shortening with powdered sugar. Water, milk, or egg whites are used to thin buttercream. Chocolate and an endless number of flavors may be added to change buttercream icing to compliment any cake flavor.

BOILED icing is a mixture of egg whites, granulated sugar, water and corn syrup. The sugar, water and syrup are brought to a boil, removed from the heat, and streamed into egg whites which are being whipped. The mixture is finally whipped to a thick meringue.

Boiled icing must be whipped in an oil free environment. A single drop of oil in the mix or adhering to utensils will prevent the egg whites from whipping. Oil free flavors may be added.

FONDANT icing is sugar based. It is very fine textured and usually must be heated or thinned down before use. The chocolate fondant type icing formula in this chapter is an especially good one. It may be used to ice cakes, donuts, cookies, brownies, and eclairs. Fondant icings are noted for their shine, hard crust and versatility.

MIXING ICING

Any mixer will do for mixing icings. Use the appropriate beaters. Make sure that all mixing utensils are spotlessly clean and oil free.

MIXING buttercream ICING

I. Cream the powdered sugar (plus cocoa, if chocolate icing) with the shortening, margarine, or butter until the mix is light and fluffy.

II. Add the flavor and any liquid to the mix very slowly. Add only enough liquid to make the mix easy to spread. Use your judgement when adding liquids. Excessive liquid (sometime even flavor extracts) will cause the mix to separate.

III. Add melted chocolate last and mix only enough to incorporate. The more the chocolate is mixed; the lighter in color the icing will become. When the chocolate cools, the mix will become slightly thicker. Use this type of icing as soon as possible.

MIXING BOILED ICING

There are two good methods for making boiled icing.

I. The first method requires placing all the ingredients in a double boiler and whipping as it heats (while over the hot water) until a stiff peak is formed.

II. The second method is to bring the sugar, water and light corn syrup to a boil, then add the hot mixture (very slowly) to pre-whipped egg whites. The mixture is whipped on high speed to a firm peak as the hot liquid is being added.

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Both methods will produce a good boiled icing, so use the method you think is best for you.

Do not over whip boiled icing. If boiled icing is over mixed, too much air will be incorporated. The icing will be thick, full of air holes and impossible to spread.

Use boiled icing as soon as possible after whipping. Boiled icing sets up quickly and is almost impossible to spread after cooling.

Sometime (not always) it is possible to save an over mixed boiled icing by putting the icing back into a double boiler and re-heating, then re-mixing. It's worth trying.

MIXING FONDANT ICING

Fondant sugar comes in two forms, dry and wet. Dry fondant is similar to powdered sugar. It is easy to use, because all you add is hot water. Scaling is quick and simple with dry fondant. Wet fondant is extremely thick. It sometimes takes an effort just to dig it out of its container. Scaling is difficult and messy because the fondant is sticky and only small amounts can be dug out to be weighed. Your scale and hands usually must be washed after using wet fondant.

I. When making fondant icings for cake, brownies and eclairs use dry fondant when possible and follow the bags directions concerning the amount of water added and mixing time. After the fondant is wet add the rest of the ingredients. When using dry fondant as a cookie icing add less water than the directions call for in mixing. Heat the thick mixture to thin it for use. It will harden to a correct consistency when it cools on the cookie. Add any food coloring or flavor to dry or wet fondant for seasonal cookies, brownies, donuts and cakes. I prefer using dry fondant, but a premixed wet fondant will do all the same things if you don't mind the mess and effort.

II. You can make your own fondant by mixing a thick mixture of powdered sugar, water and glucose. This is not nearly as good as pre-made fondant, but it can be done with ease. The best way is to use a mixer to bring the ingredients together and then heat in a water bath just enough to warm the icing. If you heat too much the icing will set up and form a heavy crust.

III. I always pour a thin layer of vegetable oil over any fondant I'm saving to prevent it from crusting.

PROBLEMS WITH ICINGS

PROBLEM: Boiled icing fails to come to a firm peak.

Usually boiled icing won't whip to a peak when there is even a minute amount of oil in the mix or on mixing utensils. Everything used to make boiled icing must be spotless.

PROBLEM: Boiled icing is difficult to spread.

You probably have whipped it too long. When over mixing is the problem; slowly add a little light corn syrup (while mixing) and thin the icing down enough for easy spreading. A last resort would be to re-heat the mix and then try to whip it again. (Sometimes this won't work.)

PROBLEM: Crumbs in icing when applying it to a cake.

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First of all, brush all the loose crumbs and edges from the cake layers. The icing should be wet enough to spread on the cake without picking up crumbs. Use an icing spatula and start with a large lump of icing and spread it thin.

If the cake is an opposite color, (chocolate cake/white icing) first thin a small portion of the icing until it is very wet and apply a thin layer to the entire cake. This wet icing will set the crumbs and fill cracks. Don't worry about crumbs getting into this layer of icing. Let the thin layer of icing sit for a few minutes, then apply a thick layer of regular icing over it.

PROBLEM: Boiled icing that gets thick and gummy after a few hours.

You probably are over mixing and adding too much air to the icing. Add an extra amount of light corn syrup to the icing while mixing. Store any cake that has been frosted with boiled icing under a cake dome, but use a wooden pick under the lid to lift the dome up a little and allow a small amount of air in.

Sitting a cake that has been frosted with boiled icing in a draft will cause the icing to quickly become thick and gummy.

PROBLEM: Buttercream icing that tastes gritty.

You are probably using old powdered sugar or powdered sugar that has not been stored properly. Powdered sugar will pick up moisture from the air and will not cream properly with the shortening.

Sifting the sugar will usually not stop the problem, so always use fresh powdered sugar and then store any left over in an air tight container.

If buttercream icing is left to sit in a draft before using, it will form a thin crust. This crust will make the icing taste gritty when it is mixed into the icing and then used on the cake.

Always cover the bowl holding the icing with a damp cloth and a crust will not form.

PROBLEM: Small lumps of shortening in my buttercream icing.

Creaming the powdered sugar and shortening thoroughly together is very important. Butter should always be softened to room temperature before creaming.

Adding a liquid to thin the icing before the shortening is completely creamed with the powdered sugar, may cause lumps. The resulting small shortening lumps are there to stay. Adding hot liquid will sometimes help the shortening cream better, but hot liquid also can cause the buttercream to melt and separate. Add liquid slowly to the mix (as you mix) and lumps should not be a problem.

PROBLEM: Freezing a cake that has been frosted.

You can freeze a cake that has been frosted with a buttercream icing. Freeze the cake (unwrapped) until it is solid. Then wrap with foil and place back in the freezer. Let the cake thaw in the refrigerator before unwrapping.

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A cake frosted in a boiled type icing will not freeze well. The icing will be ruined if you try to freeze it.

PROBLEM: What is a good flavor combination for white buttercream icing?

Try vanilla and a little almond extract. When using butter for the shortening, try vanilla and a little orange extract. Always use a small amount of any strong flavor as the background taste.

PROBLEM: I want a very dark chocolate icing on top of my devil's food cake layers, but I want to use a lighter chocolate icing for between the layers and outside edges. What must I do?

You should use two types of icing. For the top simply melt a small quantity of chocolate morsels along with a little heavy cream. Do not whip this mixture. Ice the sides and between the cake's layers with regular chocolate buttercream, then carefully spread the warm, melted chocolate over the cake's top.

TIPS ON ICING

Buttercream:

I. Mix cocoa/oil with the powdered sugar before creaming with shortening in buttercream icing. Mix three level tablespoons of cocoa with one tablespoon of salad oil or melted shortening to make one block (one ounce) of unsweetened baking chocolate. When making a portion of the buttercream chocolate flavored, use the cocoa conversion to make the chocolate flavor. Do not add raw cocoa to the finished buttercream icing.

II. Use Emulsified shortening when using food colors or colored jams in buttercream icing.

III. The more buttercream icing is mixed (after the chocolate has been added) the lighter in color the icing will become. When you want a darker colored chocolate buttercream, do not mix the icing more than necessary to blend in the chocolate.

IV. Chill freshly baked chocolate cake layers in the refrigerator before applying the icing. Gently rub any loose crumbs from the chilled layers and you will not have as much trouble spreading the icing.

BOILED ICING:

I. A little Cream of Tartar mixed with the dry sugar (before cooking) will make firmer and whiter boiled icing.

II. Cool cake layers completely before icing. Use a sharp knife and cut away humps and high sides. The layers should be fairly level before applying the icing.

FONDANT ICING:

I. Thin fondant icing by heating or use a small amount of hot liquid. Hot coffee is excellent to use when thinning Chocolate fondant.

II. Always keep fondant icing covered with plastic or a thin layer of vegetable oil.

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III. Use pre-made dry fondant when possible, because it'll save you time and effort.

IV. Use a drop of colored fondant on a cookie to add color to your display case. Sugar cookies look wonderful when dipped in thin fondant icing. Children love the color and the extra sweetness.

USING AND STORING ICINGS

I. Use the icing as soon as it is made. All icing sets up quickly and either forms a crust or becomes very stiff.

II. Buy an icing spatula to apply icing. A good icing spatula will enable you to work faster and the results will look great.

III. Apply fondant icing to brownies while they are warm. The icing will melt slightly and form a shiny surface. Sprinkle on nut-meats while the icing is sticky and soft. When brownies are cold, warm the chocolate icing (a little) in a double boiler or in your micro-wave.

IV. Thin buttercream icing with evaporated milk or warm water. Use only a little liquid and use an icing spatula to mix in.

V. Thin cold chocolate buttercream icing with a little hot water or hot coffee. Use only a small amount and mix in with an icing spatula.

VI. Always sprinkle toppings on while the icing is fresh, wet and sticky. When the icing is too dry for topping to stick, thin it with a little water or milk.

VII. Store buttercream icing in an air tight container in the refrigerator. Fresh is best, so don't make buttercream icing in advance if possible.

VIII. Always let the buttercream warm to room temperature before thinning it down for use.

IX. Boiled icing will not store well. Use what is needed and discard the rest. It's not worth the worry of trying to save. Boiled icing will last only for a couple of days. Plan for it to be sold quickly or else use buttercream icing.

X. When you have a large amount of boiled icing left over... make snow balls. Peel the paper from cupcakes or use cut cake squares and apply a thick coat of icing around the cake (use your hands). Roll the cake in loose coconut and place in cupcake liners. Snow balls are quick sellers and will add an easy variety to your line.

XI. Colored decoettes, nut-meats and coconut (raw or toasted) makes good topping for both buttercream and boiled icing.

INGREDIENTS FOR ICINGS

SUGAR: Powdered sugar used in buttercream icing must be lump free. Powdered sugar should always be sifted. Granulated sugar used in boiled icing must be clean and can not contain any bits of shortening, oil, or butter.

Fondant sugar comes in dry and wet forms. I recommend using the dry form.

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SHORTENING: Emulsified shortening, margarine, or butter may be used in buttercream icing. Use an emulsified shortening if you want a pure white icing. Use margarine or butter if you like the flavor (the icing will have a pale yellow color). Butter is an excellent ingredient to use in a chocolate flavored buttercream icing.

MILK: Use milk in a buttercream icing to enhance the flavor. Milk may also be used to thin heavy icing to a spreadable consistency.

WATER: Use warm or cold water in buttercream icing. Sometimes warm water will cause shortening; especially butter or margarine to separate. Add water slowly.

CREAM: Heavy cream is delicious in buttercream icing. Cream must be fresh because it imparts a flavor and color. Cream will also cause the icing to break down quicker than milk or water. Cream is very good in chocolate buttercream icing.

EGG WHITES: Use only fresh, clean egg whites in boiled icing. If using frozen egg whites make sure they come to room temperature.

COCOA: Use fresh, lump free cocoa in buttercream icing. When the cocoa is lumpy, push through a sifter.

CHOCOLATE: Use fresh unsweetened baking chocolate in buttercream icings. Chocolate will absorb odors and flavors. Store chocolate tightly sealed, in a cool, odor free place.

Melt unsweetened baking chocolate over a water bath using very low heat, or better yet in a micro-wave oven. Add the melted chocolate slowly to buttercream icing.

FRUIT: Small amounts of crushed, fresh fruit may be substituted for the liquid in buttercream icing. Use a flavor of the same type as the fruit. (apricot flavor added with crushed apricots, etc.) Care must be taken that the buttercream does not separate when crushed fruit is added to the mix.

SALT: Salt enhances the flavor of icings, but is not needed and very little, if any, should be used.

SPICES: Cinnamon is a good spice to use in buttercream and fondant icing. Use just a tiny amount.

FLAVORS: Flavor icing the way you like. Most flavors are concentrated, so taste as you add and don't over-flavor.

CORN SYRUP: Use light corn syrup in both buttercream and boiled type icing. Corn syrup makes the icing smooth and gives it a healthy shine. When a formula calls for glucose... corn syrup will usually do fine.

COCONUT: Fresh, moist coconut is a very good covering for both buttercream and boiled icing. Lightly toasted coconut is also good to sprinkle on freshly iced items.

NUT-MEATS: Chopped nut-meats is a good covering for buttercream icing. Sprinkle nut-meats on the icing while still wet and sticky. Use only nut-meats that have been stored properly. Taste nut-meats before using because they go rancid very quickly when not stored properly.

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DIET MARGARINE, LOW CALORIE MARGARINE:

These products are not made to be used in icing. They contain excessive air or water and should not be used as a shortening substitute.

ALMOND PASTE: Almond paste is used in icings for flavor. It must be mixed lump free before adding any thinning ingredients.

Baking Pies

TWO CRUST PIE: Fruit is the most popular filling for two crust pies. Any kind of fruit mixed with sugar, sometime spices and a thickener will make a delicious two crust fruit pie. Left-over chicken, pork and beef are also used to make a new and delicious meal when they are baked in small two-crust pies.

DEEP-DISH AND COBBLERS: Deep-dish and Cobblers are pies that are usually baked in a casserole pan. They are thick pies with a crust covering only the top. They are served by the spoonful rather than by the slice. Deep-Dish apple pie in New England is considered a way of life.

ONE CRUST PIE: Single crust pies are used to hold custard type pies such as pumpkin. Cream pies with meringue topping are single crust pies as are refrigerator pies with whipped cream topping.

MIXING PASTRY FOR PIE CRUSTS

The crust of a pie must provide support and often a cover for the pie filling. No matter if you make your crust from scratch or from a premix, it is very important that pie dough pastry is handled gently and not over mixed.

Pastry is the most popular crust for pies, but graham cracker, crushed cookies and coconut are also used. Pastry crusts are sometimes pre-baked before adding the filling. Graham cracker and crushed cookie types of crusts are usually pre-baked. Always check your recipe to make sure whether the crust is pre-baked or not.

PASTRY DOUGH

I. When using your mixer, make sure that you use the beaters designed for pastry mixing. Do not over mix the dough.

II. When using your blender, make sure that you do not over mix the dough. Blenders mix the dough very quickly.

III. Make sure that all your utensils are clean.

IV. Use chilled shortening and ice cold water in the mix.

V. Mix the chilled shortening and dry ingredients (except the salt) together first. These ingredients should be blended well. Water and salt will cause the pastry to be tough, so dissolve the salt in the ice water and add it last. Blend the dough only until the mix is not wet and sticky feeling. Adding the salt/water last with careful blending is the key to making tender, flaky pastry.

GRAHAM CRACKER AND CRUSHED COOKIE CRUST

I. Mix all the dry ingredients thoroughly when making a graham cracker or crushed cookie crust. Add the melted butter or margarine last and blend only until absorbed.

II. Do not over-mix. When this type of crust is over-mixed, it will be hard and pasty. The crumbs should be wet enough to stick together when some is squeezed in your hand. If the crumbs

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do not stick together, mix in a little more melted butter or margarine. Do not get the crumbs too wet, because the crust will taste greasy.

PIE PAN PREPARATION

I. Spray your pie pans with a release agent before lining them with graham cracker or crushed cookie crusts.

II. Use a spray without added flour.

III. A very thin coating of all-purpose shortening rubbed on the pie pan with your fingers will cause the crust release.

IV. When a refrigerator type filling is used in a graham cracker crust, it is best to place the pie on a warm surface just long enough to soften the bottom of the crust, causing it to release from the pan. Glass pans are pretty to look at and extremely useful in making pies, but they are very stubborn about releasing a crumb crust. You can wrap a hot towel around the bottom and sides of a pan to warm it enough for easy crust removal.

BAKING PIES

I. Turn on your oven about twenty minutes before using. This simple step will help insure the temperature will be more accurate when you start baking.

II. Set your oven at 365 degrees. When the heat shuts off, check the oven's temperature with an oven thermometer.

III. Place the thermometer at different points (front and back) and at different levels (bottom, middle, top shelf). The results will let you see how to best bake pies in your unique oven.

IV. When your recipe reads — "bake for 45 minutes" set your timer for 35 minutes and check your pies. Each oven is different and it's a good baking practice to check on baking progress. The most common mistake is to under bake fruit pies, but it's awful to burn the top crust.

V. Top crusts baking too fast are usually caused by excessive top heat in the oven. Cover your pies with brown paper or an extra foil pan. When you spray or paint milk on the pie top it will brown off too fast.

VI. Thin the milk-wash with water and it will take longer to brown.

VII. Pans with a dark colored, non-stick coating will cause pies to bake good on their bottoms.

VIII. Always season new pans (before using) by applying a thin coat of vegetable oil and placing in a 400 degree oven for about twenty minutes. Wipe the pans clean, cool and prepare as usual for baking. Pans coated with a dark colored, non-stick coating or glass pans do not need seasoning.

FINISHING AND STORING PIES

I. Brush the top of a two crust pie with water, milk, evaporated milk, or egg wash ... then

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sprinkle with granulated sugar to make a pretty pie.

II. Use a cookie cutter to cut shapes from flat pastry dough and place them on pie tarts and deep-dish pies. Wash and sugar the cut-outs, bake them separately ... then place on top of filled tarts, etc..

III. Use a spray bottle filled with milk to spray wash your lattice top fruit pies.

IV. Cool cream pies completely before you place meringue on them. Hot cream filling may cause the meringue to melt and later slide off the pie when it is cut.

V. Keep your knife from pulling at the meringue, by dipping the blade in water before cutting.

VI. Store fruit pies at room temperature. Cover with foil. Fruit pies freeze well. Freeze them raw, don't thaw, just bake as usual (about 45 minutes to 1 hour).

VII. Freeze pre-baked pies: Wrap in foil and thaw by placing uncovered in a 350 degree oven until the filling boils (about 20 minutes).

VIII. Store cream and whipped cream pies (covered) in the refrigerator. Meringue breaks down fast, no matter where you store it, so meringue pies must be eaten quickly.

IX. Whipped cream pies will last longer when wrapped and refrigerated. However, freezing is not recommended.

X. Brown meringue in a hot oven, about 425 degrees. Browning meringue at lower temperatures may cause the top to form a thick crust.

A QUICK TOUR OF PIE CRUST FAULTS

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

The crust is too light.

Causes may be:

Insufficient milk/sugar.

Oven temperature too low.

Dough too cold, combined with a low baking temperature.

Improper or no wash.

Baking time too short.

The crust is too dark.

Causes may be:

Excessive milk/sugar.

Oven temperature too high.

Improper wash.

Baking time too long.

INTERNAL APPEARANCE

The crust is dry and crumbly.

Causes may be:

Excessive milk/sugar.

Over baked at a low temperature.

Insufficient liquid.

Insufficient shortening.

Wrong type of flour.

The crust is tough.

Causes may be:

Over mixed.

Wrong type of flour.

Excessive salt or added too soon in mixing.

Dough too hot when mixed.

Insufficient shortening.

Excessive water.

PIE CRUST PRODUCTION HINTS

BAKING:

I. Bake pie crust at 355 to 375 degrees in a standard oven.

II. Bake pie crust at 325 to 355 degrees in a convection oven.

III. Bring the crust to 70 to 80 degrees before baking.

IV. Wash the crust with a milk wash that will give a desired color.

V. Bake pies as quickly as possible.

VI. Pre-bake shells to a golden brown only.

VII. Pre-bake shells to a light brown if more baking is required after filling is added.

MIXING:

I. Use very cold or ice water.

II. Follow formula method exactly.

III. Use the correct flour (Pastry).

IV. Do not over mix the dough.

V. Use cool shortening if possible.

VI. Keep the dough cold during all processing.

VII. Add the salt with the last addition of water. Salt causes the gluten in flour to toughen.

VIII. All equipment should be clean.

HANDLING:

I. Bring (cold) pies to 70 or 80 degrees before baking.

II. Let cool in a draft free area.

III. Freeze only dough which has been properly mixed and handled (always cover).

IV. Never let pie dough warm to room temperature before using.

V. Use baked shells as soon as possible. Cover with a plastic bag any to be used (the next day).

VI. Use raw dough as soon as it matures (usually overnight).

PIE FILLINGS TIPS

FRUIT PIES:

- I. Save the drained juice from frozen or canned fruit and use fruit juice instead of water in your recipe. This is only a good idea if the juice does not have a lot of sugar in it.
- II. Add fresh butter to your fruit pie filling after it has been cooked. Or dot pieces of butter over the fruit before you place on the top crust.
- III. Don't cut apples pieces too thin when you are using fresh apples. Larger chunks will hold together and have more apple flavor.
- IV. Use a little red food color and a drop or two of almond extract in your cherry pies when you use fresh or canned cherries.
- V. Use a little yellow food color and a teaspoon of lemon juice in your apricot and peach fruit pies. The lemon juice will enhance their flavor and also help keep a bright color.
- VI. Use cinnamon and a little clove to flavor raisin pie. Let raisins sit in hot water to plump before you cook them in a filling.
- VII. Mix a few raisins with fresh chopped apples and make a easy, new apple pie.
- VIII. Apply any glaze, for shine, after the fruit pie is baked.
- IX. Do not over-cook pie fillings, especially those with corn starch used as the thickener. The filling will break down and quickly become watery. Over cooking fillings made with flour will cause the filling to be thick.
- X. Add the thickening mixture as soon as the water/sugar comes to a boil and cook until the mixture becomes clear and thick enough to coat your spoon or whisk.
- XI. Add canned fruit pie fillings to a pre-baked pie crust and either top with pre-baked pastry cut-outs or whipped cream. When you use canned fruit pie fillings, you don't have to bake the pie.
- XII. Dried apricots, apples and peaches make excellent fruit pies. Always plump them until soft in boiling water before making into a pie filling.

CREAM PIES:

- I. Cook your cream pie filling in a double boiler or in a very thick sided pot. Cream fillings scorch easily when cooked over direct heat. A copper pot is best. It is very important to clean a copper pot each time you use it. Use a mixture of vinegar and salt to clean the copper.
- II. Melted chocolate morsels or baking chocolate added to your favorite vanilla cream filling will make a good chocolate pie filling.
- III. Stir a little canned fruit pie filling into your vanilla cream filling to make a delicious fruit cream pie.

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- IV. Dip sliced bananas into lemon juice to keep them from turning dark. Let your vanilla filling cool completely before adding sliced bananas.
- V. Add raw coconut to your vanilla pie filling while the filling is hot. The heat will cause the coconut oil to release its flavor into the filling.
- VI. Sprinkle raw coconut over the meringue before browning. The lightly browned coconut will give more flavor to your coconut cream pie.
- VII. Using canned lemon pie filling is a quick and easy way to make lemon meringue pie. Just put the filling in a pre-baked pie shell, top with meringue, brown and serve.
- VIII. Always use the zest of a fresh lemon in your scratch lemon pie filling.
- IX. Bake Lemon or Lime cream pies made with Sweetened and Condensed milk for exactly twenty minutes at 350 degrees. Cool completely before adding topping. Your Lemon and Lime pies refrigerator pies will be perfect every time.
- X. Always let your vanilla cream filling cool to room temperature before you add fresh fruit. Hot filling will draw out the water from fresh fruit and cause the filling to separate.
- XI. Bananas, your vanilla wafers and cream filling makes an ever popular dessert. Display and serve from a cobbler pan. Layer cream filling, vanilla wafers, sliced bananas in that order until the pan is full. Place vanilla wafers side-by-side flat over the top or cover with a baked meringue.

CUSTARD TYPE PIES:

- I. Egg custard pies are best when baked in a crust that has been partially pre-baked. They should be baked at about 300 degrees in a water bath. (Set the pie in a pan containing a little over one-fourth inch of water.)
- II. Pumpkin pies and sweet potato pies are best baked at a high temperature (425 degrees) for about 15 minutes then at a lower temperature (375 degrees) until they are done.
- III. Chess type pies such as Pecan pie should be baked at 300 degrees for about one hour and twenty to thirty minutes.
- IV. Pecan pie bakes best at a low temperature.
- V. Chocolate morsels and/or a little coconut make a delicious addition to pecan pie. Bake normally.

WHIPPED CREAM PIES:

- I. Use whipped topping rather than fresh whipping cream in your whipped cream pies. Whipped topping will hold up better and tastes as good as fresh whipping cream.
- II. Always let your cream filling cool completely before adding the filling to the whipped topping. Warm filling may not break the whipped topping down completely, but the heat may hurt the texture.

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III. Try mixing peanut butter and vanilla pie filling together then add the mixture to whipped topping. A peanut butter whipped cream pie is delicious.

COBBLERS:

I. Spray or paint a diluted solution of water and milk then sprinkle a coating of granulated sugar on top of your cobbler's crust.

II. Since there is more filling and less crust in a serving of cobbler; make sure the spices are correct in matching the fruit filling. Pastry crust is always a major part of the dessert and less of it demands that you are perfect in presenting the cobbler's filling.

III. If possible, make your cobblers in half-pans rather than full pans. Each dessert will have a better filling and crust combination when done this way.

IV. Make cobblers out of (two crust) pies that may be under baked or have boiled over too much to sell. Take off the top crust and use the filling and broken up bottom crust for the cobbler filling. This will save losing the two crust pies, but do not abuse. Always use quality ingredients to make each product you sell.

INGREDIENTS FOR PIES

SUGAR: Granulated sugar is best to use in most fruit and cream pies. Granulated sugar is also best to use in meringues. Brown sugar is best to use in Pecan pies.

FLOUR: All-purpose flour is good to use in pie crusts. Pastry flour is best.

SHORTENING: Chilled all-purpose shortening or hydrogenated is best to use in pie crusts. Butter or margarine is good to use in all sorts of fillings.

FRUIT: Always use ripe fruit in making pies. Over-ripe or green fruit will affect the taste and texture of the filling. Frozen fruit is excellent to use for pie baking. Thaw it completely and drain off all the juice. Canned fruit is also very good in pies. Most canned fruit is packed in syrup and must be drained. Canned prepared fruit pie filling is the easiest solution to making a fruit pie filling. Many fruit choices are available and all are good. Sometimes you may use the juice instead of water, if your recipe calls for water. Frozen fruit is very fragile and must be handled with care to prevent crushing.

MILK: Powdered milk is good to use in pie crusts. Milk helps the crust brown and gives it a better flavor. Fresh milk is good to use in cream filling instead of water. Evaporated milk will give cream filling a rich taste.

EGGS: Fresh, clean eggs should always be used in pie making. Separate the eggs while they are cold, but it's best to let the whites come to room temperature before whipping. Be careful with egg whites, they must be kept in a grease free environment if they are to be whipped.

SALT: Salt is important to flavor enhancement. Salt must be used in pie crust, but is not necessary in fillings.

THICKENERS: Corn starch, all-purpose flour and gelatin are commonly used thickeners for pie filling. Corn starch and all-purpose flour are usually used to thicken fruit pie fillings.

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Gelatin is used for whipped cream and chiffon type pies.

CHEESE: Cream cheese is the most commonly used cheese for pie fillings. Make sure the cheese is fresh and not watery.

CREAM: Heavy cream is whipped for toppings, or whipped and folded into other ingredients for whipped cream pies. Light cream is usually spooned over hot pie portions for serving. Cream must be fresh. Look at the date on the container.

SPICES: Cinnamon, allspice, clove, nutmeg and ginger are the most popular spices for pies. Make sure that the spice you use is fresh. Spice loses flavor with age, especially when not sealed properly.

CHOCOLATE: Mix cocoa with salad oil or melted butter before using to flavor cream pies. Melted pure chocolate morsels are also good to use. Melted bitter chocolate baking squares are best to use in chocolate flavored pies. Make sure the cocoa and chocolate you use is fresh. Chocolate absorbs odors and will have a bad flavor when not stored properly.

COCONUT: Use fresh, moist coconut in cream pies. Lightly toast a small portion of the coconut and mix with your coconut filling to enhance the taste. Add the raw coconut while the cream filling is hot to release the flavor.

NUTS: Nut-meats should always be fresh. They go rancid quickly and should be tasted before using in a filling.

SYRUP: Honey, molasses, light corn syrup and dark corn syrup are the most popular syrups used in pie fillings.

JUICE: Whenever possible use fruit juice instead of water when making fruit pie filling. Canned apple juice will enhance the flavor of almost all fruit fillings.

FLAVOR: Vanilla is the most popular flavor used in pie fillings. Use fresh fruit juice when possible to flavor pie fillings. Lemon, lime and orange juice makes for a tangy flavor that no artificial flavor can compare.

DIET MARGARINE AND LOW CALORIE MARGARINE:

These products are not designed for baking and should never be used as a substitute for regular margarine, shortening or butter.