

The Dessert Box

Delectable Desserts Delivered To Your Door!

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The Dessert Box
Presents:

Baking 101

The Basics for Good Baking

2005 Edition

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SAFETY FIRST!

Hand-Washing How-To:

- Always wash hands before making or eating food.
- Use warm water and soap. Lather all over hands and wrists.
- Scrub the front and back of hands and between fingers too.
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse under running water, rubbing hands.
- Dry with a clean towel.

Handling Eggs:

To separate a yolk from the white, use an egg separator. Place the egg separator over a bowl and add an egg to the separator. The white will drain away from the yolk into the bowl. Avoid separating the egg yolk from the egg white by passing the yolk from shell to shell; this not considered safe.

Be careful as you separate your eggs -- even just a tiny speck of fat, oil, or yolk in the bowl will prevent the whites from whipping. For the best results, separate your eggs and let the whites sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before beating.

For slightly beaten eggs, use a fork to beat the whole egg till the yolk and white are combined and no streaks remain. To beat egg yolks, use an electric mixer on high speed for about 5 minutes or until they are thick and lemon-colored.

For soft peaks, place egg whites in a clean glass or metal bowl (not plastic), and beat with an electric mixer on medium speed or with a rotary beater until egg whites form peaks with tips that curl over when the beaters are lifted.

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USE THE RIGHT TOOLS!

List of Bake Ware Essentials

1. Mixing bowls - You can get them in stainless steel, ceramic or glass. Never use plastic, as it absorbs scents over time!
2. Baking dishes and pans - Use non-stick for your muffin tins and cake pans but avoid them for pie plates since the non-stick surface will get scratched when you cut the pies.
 - 8 inch and 9 inch round cake pan
 - muffin tins - small and large
 - 8 by 8 by 2 inch cake or baking dish
 - 9 by 13 by 2 inch baking dish
 - 8 or 9 inch pie plate
3. Baking sheets - at least 2, with or without rims.
4. Nonstick reusable baking liners or parchment paper
5. Set of dry measuring cups
6. Set of liquid measuring cups
7. Rolling pin - a baker's pin - one with no handles.
8. Hand held mixer
9. Wire cake racks - need at least 2
10. Silicon rubber spatulas (non-melting)
11. Timer

Other Great Tools

Cookie cutters, Toothpicks for testing doneness of baked goods, Kitchen scale, Zester, Sifter, Pastry brush, Pastry blender, Cookie cutters or cookie press, Pastry sealer, Pie weights (these can be the expensive kind or a jar of beans and tin foil), Cake decorating kit

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Dry & Liquid Measuring

There's A Difference?

Yes, there is a difference in the liquid measuring cups and the dry cups.

Read the recipe thoroughly before starting and make sure you have the correct liquid and dry standard measuring spoons and cups, and correct pan sizes.

All recipes use a standard dry-measuring cup for dry ingredients, including flours, cornmeal, and cocoa, granulated and powdered sugars

For dry ingredients, gently fill the measuring cup to heaping, using a large spoon. Do not shake the cup or pack down the ingredients. While holding the cup over the canister or storage container to catch the excess of the ingredient, level the cup off, using something with a straight edge, such as a knife, metal spatula or handle of a wooden spoon.

When measuring liquids, use the smallest measuring cup size you have that is large enough to hold the amount needed. For example, to measure 1/2 cup milk, you'd use a 1-cup measuring cup instead of 2-cup measuring cup. Place the cup on a level surface, then bend down to check the amount at eye level.



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Stocking Your Pantry

These Are the Basics For Baking...

- A good supply of different types of flours
- Chocolate: unsweetened squares, semisweet chips, cocoa powder
- Cornmeal (white or yellow or both), cornstarch or corn flour
- Dried fruits: raisins, apricots
- Sugar: granulated or confectioners
- a container of powdered buttermilk
- instant non-fat dry milk
- Cans of evaporated and sweetened condensed milk
- Unflavored and flavored gelatin
- Light and dark brown sugars
- Molasses, honey, light and dark corn syrup
- Salt (I recommend Kosher - even for baking!)
- Baking soda
- Baking powder
- Cream of tartar
- Dry Yeast
- Solid vegetable shortening such as Crisco
- Liquid vegetable oil
- Cooking spray
- Spices: ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg, mixed spice, allspice
- Extracts: almond, rum, lemon and orange
- Packaged lemon and orange zest
- Whole vanilla beans (or pods)
- Pure Vanilla extract

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Great Baking Tips

- Preheat your oven before you mix the ingredients or, for yeast breads, after the first rise.
- Measure liquid ingredients in a glass measure on a flat surface, lining up the markings at eye level.
- Measure dry ingredients in a dry measuring cup or measuring spoons. Unless instructed otherwise, don't pack dry ingredients into measuring cups. Instead, spoon them lightly into the cup, then level the top with a straight-edged knife or spoon handle.
- Stir all-purpose flour before measuring. It is not necessary to sift it. Cake flour does need sifting.
- Choose your bake ware by color. Shiny bake ware reflects heat and slows the browning process, making it ideal for shortbread and soft-crust breads. Cookware with a dull finish and glass baking dishes will absorb more heat and brown crusts much more quickly, which is perfect for piecrusts, cookies, coffee cakes, and crusty breads.
- When making cutouts, try to get as many biscuits or cookies as you can from the first rolling. Too many rerollings may cause the dough to become tough and dry.
- For yeast breads, use active dry yeast that has not passed its expiration date. Following the recipe directions, measure the temperature of the liquids with a thermometer to make sure it's warm enough to activate the yeast, but not so warm that it kills it.
- Grease muffin cups and baking pans on the bottoms and only halfway up the sides to prevent crusty rims around the finished products.
- For even baking, bake on one rack of your oven. If you must use two racks, place them one or two levels apart, and position the bake ware to allow warm air to circulate.
- To avoid soggy sides and bottoms, cool baked foods in the pans only as long as the recipe directs, then transfer the baked goods to a wire rack to finish cooling.