



KITCHEN HELPER

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EASIEST SUGAR COOKIE

Note: This cookie can be made in one bowl with no machines but requires chilling for either 30 minutes in the freezer or 60 minutes in the refrigerator before baking. (See notes below for variations.)



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted and cooled for 5 minutes
(If you have salted butter, reduce the salt to ½ teaspoon)
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar + additional 1/2 cup sugar for rolling
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar (light or dark)
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch (Not essential but makes for a lighter, better texture)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

PREPARATION:

In a medium sized bowl, combine the melted butter, 1-1/2 cups granulated sugar, and the light brown sugar. Add the eggs and vanilla and mix until just combined and smooth.

Add flour, cornstarch, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Mix only until you can no longer see streaks of flour. I use a rubber spatula and scoop from the bottom up and over to the top.

Cover the dough and refrigerate for at least an hour or chill in the freezer for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Using either a 2 tablespoon cookie scoop or 2-3 heaping tablespoons of cookie dough, roll into balls, then roll the balls in sugar to coat. Place onto the prepared baking sheet, giving plenty of room for spreading. The dough can stay in the fridge waiting to be scooped for up to two weeks, tightly wrapped. You should be able to fit 6-8 cookies per tray.

Bake for 12-16 minutes, or until the edges are JUST beginning to set and the centers are still puffy and soft and seem underbaked. Remove from the oven and let cool FULLY on the baking sheet to set the cookies.

Variations and Notes

For standard sugar cookies, roll the cookies in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar.

You can omit rolling the cookies in sugar and sprinkle them with Swedish pearl sugar (which looks like coarse Kosher salt) or raw sugar for a pleasant contrast of soft cookie and crunchy topping

Chocolate cookie variation

Sugar: For 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar substitute:

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ white sugar

Flour: Instead of using 3 cups flour substitute:

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsweetened cocoa (regular or Dutch)

Vanilla: Instead of using 1 tablespoon vanilla extract substitute **one** of the following:

1 teaspoon mint extract (for chocolate mint cookies)
1 teaspoon instant espresso powder (in the coffee aisle) for mocha cookies
1 teaspoon almond extract (for chocolate almond cookies (all optional)

For rolling chocolate sugar cookies: To 6 tablespoons white granulated sugar, add 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons unsweetened cocoa. Mix well then roll.

Chocolate Sugar Cookie Mix-ins

add ½ cup chopped almonds (toasted for 10 minutes is really delicious) to the dough before chilling, especially if you're adding almond extract)

OR

Add ½ cup chocolate chips or chopped chocolate (milk, dark, semi-sweet or your favorite chocolate bar chopped into little squares, not shards which will just melt)

Lemon Sugar Cookie variation:

Vanilla: Instead of using 1 tablespoon vanilla extract, add the grated yellow zest (peel) of 1 washed and dried lemon (preferably organic) and 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (for lemon cookies.) Strain out the seeds and lemon bits for a better texture in your cookie.

For rolling lemon sugar cookies: Mix the grated zest of an organic lemon with ½ cup white granulated sugar. Mix, let sit for at least 30 minutes if possible, then pour the sugar mixture into a metal sieve and strain out the lemon zest. Roll the balls o' dough in the lemon sugar.

Spiced Sugar Cookie variation

Remove 2 teaspoons of flour from the 3 cups you've measured.

Add:

1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground cloves

For rolling spiced sugar cookies: Mix 1 ½ teaspoons cinnamon with ½ cup white granulated sugar. Roll balls in sugar until coated.

Spiced cookie mix-ins:

(optional) ½ cup golden raisins, regular raisins, finely chopped crystallized ginger, or currants soaked in hot water or hot Celestial Seasoning Bengal Spice tea for 10 minutes. Drain before mixing into dough.

Last Variation, I Promise----

Icing Your Cookies

**** Don't roll the dough balls in sugar if icing ****

Cookie Icing

Ingredients:

1 cup confectioners' sugar

2 teaspoons milk (or nondairy milk, or lemon juice, or chocolate syrup, or ginger syrup)

2 teaspoons light corn syrup (makes the icing dry hard and shiny-great for storing)

¼ teaspoon vanilla or almond or lemon extract

Food coloring (I like the Americolor sold at Michael's and online) with so many beautiful colors, but any food coloring works

Preparation:

In a small bowl, stir together confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth. Beat in corn syrup and your extract-of-choice until icing is smooth and glossy. If icing is too thick and doesn't spread easily with the rounded part of a teaspoon or paintbrush, add more corn syrup or milk.

Divide into separate bowls, and add food colorings to each to desired intensity. Dip cookies, or paint them with a brush. Let cookies dry completely before storing or serving.