

Classic Cookie Recipes

Cookies. What could be more satisfying than a big spoonful of chocolate chip cookie dough? This basic chocolate chip cookie recipe came from my mom, and before that, my dad's mom. I remember hanging over the counter while Mom mixed cookies in her old faithful Sunbeam mixer, waiting for that first spoonful of cookie dough. Each stage was so scrummy—first the creamy mix of butter and sugar, then after the eggs were added and fluffed up (I know, I know, **raw** eggs! But it never made us sick), and then the dough after the flour was added, and then, oh bliss! The chocolate chips! Next, the smell of the cookies baking, then coming out of the oven all perfectly rounded and lumpy where the chocolate chips were. So I will share with you how I do cookies and some of the variations I've done over time. I've learned that if a cookie recipe has this base, you're pretty much good to go.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

1 cup salted butter
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup white sugar
2 eggs
1-2 teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon baking soda
3 1/4 - 3 1/2 cups flour
11.5-ounce bag milk chocolate chips
(about 2 cups)

Soften butter to room temperature. Add sugars and beat well, till creamy looking. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. While you're doing this step, add your baking soda and vanilla. Add flour and mix well, then add chocolate chips. If your dough seems too stiff, add a bit of cream. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes. I leave them in until the edges are slightly browned. Yield: 3 1/2 dozen (Possibly a few more if no one snitches, including you. But you're entitled to snitching if you're mixing it up, right? That's a fair exchange of calories any day.)

More in depth notes if you're that type.

BEATING: With my Kitchenaid, I do about 3 minutes of beating after each addition, set on a speed of about six. This is a bit finicky, because you want to beat them plenty, but not too long, or your cookies will turn out cakey. If you cream the butter and sugar well, you won't need to beat the eggs quite as long. In one recent cookie making session, it took about 7 1/2 minutes of total beating time to cream the sugar and butter and beat each egg in.

BUTTER: Soften to room temperature. Of course, that depends on how warm your house is. I like mine softened to slightly warmer than our house temp. I should be soft, but not at all runny. If you get it too soft, your cookies will flatten out more in the pan.

BUTTER SUBSTITUTES: I've used half coconut oil and half butter flavored shortening with good success. It makes the cookies slightly crispier. You'll need to add a little salt if you use these options. A half teaspoon is good. Margarine works okay if you make sure you don't use the spread. Margarine that has too high of a water content will make your cookies flatter and crispier.

EGGS: I used to always use the large white eggs you get from town, but over the years I've used all types. If you're using eggs from your own chickens, and they are bigger than the average large egg from town, cut back—use 1 egg and 1 egg white. Sometimes farm eggs can be a bit runny; if this is the case I'll use a bit less as well.

A comment about eating the dough: my mom was always paranoid about cracked eggs and food poisoning, so I'm super vigilant about inspecting mine for cracks, real or imagined, before adding them to the cookie dough.

LEAVENING AGENTS AND OTHER: The original recipe calls for 1 teaspoon baking soda, but over time, and after using



... give them the smell of cookies baking ...

other recipes, I have started adding 1 teaspoon of baking powder as well. I read somewhere that for the “perfect” chocolate chip cookie, you should use a bit of cornstarch, so I add 2 teaspoons of that, too.

VANILLA: Use Watkins brand, or another high quality vanilla. Or add a bit extra if you prefer the cheap-o stuff from Walmart.

FLOUR: I recommend something at least mid-grade. It seems like with the cheaper brands, my cookies turn out cakey and don’t flatten out properly. Fluff up the flour, scoop out a cup full, then tip the excess off or use a knife to scrape it off if you prefer. Be careful that you don’t pack it down at all. Oh, and don’t use a cup that is for measuring liquid (e.g., a glass 4-cup measuring cup).

Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

Add 1 teaspoon cinnamon when you’re adding the baking soda, and replace flour with 1 1/2 cups flour and 3 cups quick oats. Replace chocolate chips with 2 cups raisins.

Oatmeal Chocolate Chip

Replace flour with 1 1/2 cups flour and 3 cups quick oats.

Peanut Butter Oatmeal

After adding the eggs, add 2/3 cup peanut butter. Replace flour with 2 cups oatmeal and 2 cups flour. Add 2 cups chocolate chips. A bulk food store close to where we live carries something they call Fun Drops which is a mixture of chocolate chips, semi-sweet chips, peanut butter chips, butterscotch chips, white chips and multi-colored chocolate candies. It is really good to add these. Use your imagination!

Turtle Cookies

Along with the chocolate chips, add 1 package caramel bits and about 1 cup of pecans chopped to the size you prefer. I like mine about one-fourth the size of a pecan. Bake on parchment paper so the caramel bits don’t stick to your cookie sheet.

Gluten, Egg & Dairy Free

Replace butter with 1/2 cup shortening (butter flavored is good) and 1/2 cup coconut oil. Replace eggs with 1/4 cup applesauce and 2 tablespoons cornstarch. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt. Instead of flour, use 3 cups oat flour and 2 cups oatmeal. (Oat flour can be made by putting oatmeal in blender and blending it until it is powdery.)

Double Chocolate Chip

Add 1/2 cup cocoa right before you add the flour. Reduce flour to 2 3/4 cups. Use semi-sweet chocolate chips for even more chocolaty goodness.

Toffee Bits Cookies

Reduce flour to 3 or 3 1/4 cups. Add 1/2 cup oat flour. Add 3/4 cup toffee bits when you add the chocolate chips. You can reduce the amount of chocolate chips here if you prefer. Another slight variation: Use half white chips and half chocolate chips along with the toffee bits.

Just the Dough

If you want a batch of dough to share with everyone, and don’t like the thought of the raw egg, replace the egg with 3-4 ounces of cream cheese. Don’t bake. Place on counter with a pile of spoons.

Snickerdoodles

Instead of 1 cup brown sugar, do another cup of white sugar. Add 2 teaspoons cream of tartar when mixing in the baking soda. Roll into balls, then roll in a mixture of 4 tablespoons sugar and 3 teaspoons cinnamon before putting on cookie sheet and baking.

Gingersnap Cookies

Along with the eggs, add 1/2 cup sorghum or molasses. Add an extra 3 teaspoons baking soda, 2 teaspoons cinnamon, and 2-3 teaspoons ground ginger. Use 4 cups flour. Roll in sugar before putting on cookie sheet and baking.

