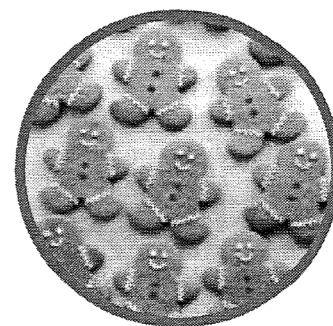


GINGERBREAD COOKIE RECIPE



4.9 from 43 reviews



Author: Melissa Griffiths – Bless this Mess Prep Time: 40 mins Cook Time: 10 mins

Total Time: 50 minutes Yield: 3 dozen large cookies 1x

DESCRIPTION

These **soft gingerbread cookies** are sweet and lightly spiced. This is the perfect cut-out cookie recipe, and it will quickly become a family favorite for the holidays!

INGREDIENTS

SCALE

1 cup butter, at room temperature (salted or unsalted)
1 cup granulated white sugar
1 egg
1 cup light or dark molasses (do not use blackstrap or cooking molasses)
2 tablespoons white vinegar
5 cups flour
1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Cream butter, adding sugar gradually. Beat until well combined and light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
- 2 Beat in egg, molasses, and vinegar.
- 3 Sift all of the dry ingredients together and then blend sifted dry ingredients into the wet ingredients.
- 4 Divide the dough into two even pieces, wrap each piece of dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 to 90 minutes.
- 5 When the dough is done chilling, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Working in sections, roll the dough to 1/2" thick on a floured surface; cut into desired shapes. Place shapes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or a baking mat. Gather and reroll "scraps" of dough as needed, using all of the dough.
- 6 Bake at 350 degrees for 9-11 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the pan for 5 minutes, and then move to a cooling rack.
- 7 Repeat with remaining dough.
- 8 Leave plain or decorate (here are 6 Simple Ways to Decorate Gingerbread Cookies if you are looking for some inspo).

NOTES

If you like your gingerbread on the crispy side, roll it 1/4" thick and bake for 11-12 minutes. If you like it nice and soft (though still very sturdy), roll the dough 1/2" thick and bake for 10 minutes. If you play around with the thickness of the dough and the baking time, you'll discover a cookie that meets your liking. I really like this thick and soft.

The dough can be held in the fridge for 2 days before using without any issues.

You may need to add up to a 1/2 cup more flour as needed so the dough is workable. I'm cooking from an arid kitchen.

I've used both salted and unsalted butter for this recipe and haven't noticed much of a difference, use what you have.

You can substitute the white vinegar with apple cider vinegar without any issues.

Use light, dark, or "fancy" molasses in this recipe. Do not use blackstrap or cooking molasses as your cookies will be bitter if you use the latter two. Here's a post on how to make gingerbread without molasses.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Cookie

Serves 36

Amount Per Serving

Calories 160

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 5.4g 8%

Cholesterol 18.7mg 6%

Sodium 131.3mg 5%

Total Carbohydrate 26g 9%

Sugars 12.6g

Protein 2g 4%

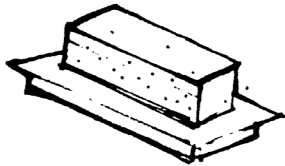
Vitamin A 3% Vitamin C 0%

ROLL OUT THE COOKIES
FOODS AND NUTRITION, LEVEL III
Member Handout

Cookie Make-Up

Ingredient

Function



Fat, such as butter, adds richness, tenderness, flavor and flakiness.



Provides the framework or structure.



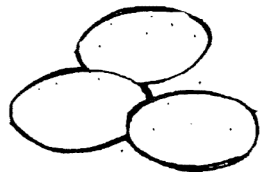
Sweetening adds tenderness, flavor, crispiness, browning.



Liquid binds, moistens, helps ingredients react with each other.



Leavening agents (baking powder, baking soda, cream of tartar) produce gas to cause rising, tenderness, lightness.



Eggs add flavor, golden color, moistness, and are a binding agent.



Extracts, such as vanilla, enhance flavor and add new flavors.

ROLL OUT THE COOKIES

FOODS AND NUTRITION, LEVEL III

Member Handout

Roll Out the Cookies

What is a rolled cookie?

Some helpful hints when rolling out cookies:

- Chill dough well (2-3 hours) in the refrigerator before rolling.
- Sprinkle a small amount of flour on a board or pastry cloth. The flour will spread evenly if you use a sifter. Or you can roll cookies between two pieces of waxpaper.
- Shape the chilled dough into a ball. Make two or more balls if you have a large batch of cookies. Return the dough you are not working to the refrigerator.
- Roll the rolling pin through the flour.
- Roll out dough until about $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick, or as recipe instructs.
- Cut with a cookie cutter which has been dipped in flour.
- A metal spatula may help you pick up the cut cookies. Run it under the cookie and place the cookie on the baking sheet.
- Gather up scraps of dough. Form in a ball and roll like you did the first time. These cookies will not be as tender as those rolled first because of the extra flour used in rolling.

Baking Tips

- Your baking sheet should not fill the oven. You should have a couple of inches of space on all sides for even baking.

When are rolled cookies done?

- When they are light brown.
- Don't overbake—even one minute can make a difference.
- Remove cookies from baking sheet immediately **unless** recipe tells you not to.
- Cool on wire rack.

Creative Cookies

- Make a giant cookie. Cut out with a coffee can lid or cut around a plate. Use in place of cake for someone's birthday.
- Sprinkle colored sugar on unbaked cookies.
- Use raisins to make faces and buttons on cookies before baking.
- Make a cookie pop. Place popsicle sticks on baking sheet and lay cookies over the end of the stick. Press cookie down lightly on stick. Bake.

Taken from: *Be a Better Baker*, by Pat Beck, Nutrition Specialist, Cooperative Extension Service, North Dakota State University, 1987

How to Decorate Cookies

6 simple ways to decorate gingerbread cookies that are easy, pretty and don't outshine the simple sweet and spice combo that makes the cookie famous.

1. Decorate gingerbread cookies with royal icing.

This is the classic way to decorate gingerbread cookies and one that should be first on the list! Royal icing is a very plain icing made from egg whites (or store-bought meringue powder), powdered sugar and water. It dries super firm, making it the perfect "glue" for gingerbread houses, too. It's sweet and adds a delicious crunchy texture to the soft cookie. That being said, it's not so delicious that you want to pile it high on the cookie. Simple lines and outlines are all that you'll want and need when it comes to using royal icing for gingerbread.

You can use the Royal Icing Recipe (included) or use your own recipe and put it in a few disposable piping bags, tie off the end and cut a little of the tip off. This is a really easy way for kids to decorate cookies, too. So simple!

2. Decorate gingerbread cookies using candies.

I love using seasonal candies to decorate cookies! In this case, I bought a bag of holiday baking M&M's and went to town. You can also use things like Sixlets and gumdrops. I used royal icing (as mentioned above) to "glue" my candies to the cookies. You don't need much and they stick great!

3. Decorate gingerbread cookies using sprinkling sugars.

I LOVE using chubby sprinkling sugar (especially colored ones) for gingerbread cookie decorating. When you make the cookies, cut them out and place them on a parchment lined baking sheet. BEFORE you bake them, sprinkle with the coarse sugars and then lightly press them into the uncooked dough. Bake as directed and let cool.

I think the texture of the sugar goes really well with the soft cookies. They look great, and (best of all) they are literally no more effort than a few shakes of the wrist before baking! Such an easy way to add a little flare to your holiday cookies.

These are the sprinkling sugars that I used if you want to snag some.

4. Decorate gingerbread cookies using rubber stamps or fancy rolling pins.

How fun is this? I just washed some rubber stamps that I had with a little soap and water and then I pressed them lightly into the gingerbread cookie dough before baking. Then I baked it as directed and that's it! I LOVE how simple and fun these turned out and you have so many options when it comes to stamps. I was surprised at how well the words came out and the snowflakes were so fun. You don't have to go seasonal either, simple hearts or stars work too.

5. Decorate gingerbread cookies using candy melts and a paint brush.

I had so much fun experimenting with this! I didn't want to dip the whole cookie in chocolate or the colored candy melts. I feel like it changes the taste and texture of an already delicious cookie too much. So I decided to melt the candy melts in a small bowl and then used a good quality clean paintbrush to paint on the colored melted chocolate. It looked so pretty! You could also dip part of the cookie in the candy melts (like the top of the stocking) or simply drizzle a little over the top. Feel free to add a few sprinkles to the mix too.

The idea here is that a little goes a long way and to not overload the cookie with too much chocolate or candy melts.

6. Decorate gingerbread cookies using cute sprinkles.

I pressed different sprinkles into the gingerbread cookie dough before baking and then baked as directed. Super easy and fun way to add a few little details to the cookies without much effort on your part. You might want to do a few test runs on the sprinkles though before you commit to a whole bunch of cookies. I found that a few sprinkles bled or melted when cooked, though lots were not affected by the heat. Bake them and see which you like best after they are cooked!

Royal Icing Recipe

Pipe buttercream roses, rosettes and other decorations using this hard-drying royal icing. Made using only three ingredients, this easy royal icing recipe is great for outlining and flooding sugar cookies, as well as piping festive holiday decorations on your gingerbread house. Because this royal icing dries hard, it's not recommended for icing cakes and cupcakes, but it can be used to attach piped flowers and other decorations to your treats. You can even make royal icing decorations weeks in advance for even easier decorating. Though traditionally made with egg whites, you can make this royal icing recipe without eggs using Wilton Meringue Powder.

Ingredients:

3 Tablespoons Meringue Powder, 8 oz.

4 Cups (about 1 lb.) confectioners sugar

5 Tablespoons warm water

Instructions:

Step 1:

Beat all ingredients together until icing forms peaks (7-10 minutes at low speed with a heavy-duty mixer, 10-12 minutes at high speed with a hand-held mixer).

Helpful Hints: Keep all utensils completely grease-free for proper icing consistency.

For stiff icing: Use 1 tablespoon less water. When using large countertop mixer or for stiffer icing, use 1 tablespoon less water.

For thin icing: To thin for pouring, add 1 teaspoon water per cup of royal icing. Use grease-free spoon or spatula to stir slowly. Add 1/2 teaspoon water at a time until you reach proper consistency.

Meringue Powder is a must for this recipe. Do not substitute with raw egg whites (which can be a food safety issue) or dried egg whites; neither will produce the same results as Meringue Powder.

To store: Store royal icing in an airtight container at room temperature for up to two weeks. Before re-using, re-whip using a paddle attachment on low speed until it's back to the correct consistency.