Gingerbread Cookies for kids

Baking · ages 8 to 12 (grades 3rd–6th) · about 50 minutes, plus 40 minutes waiting · serves 12

Spicy, sweet and cut into little people. Let's bake a whole gingerbread crowd! Steps marked Grown-up step are for a grown-up to do.

Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup butter (or coconut oil)
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ cup molasses
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1½ tablespoons cold water

Tools

The oven (grown-up), A mixing bowl, Measuring cups, Measuring spoons, A big spoon, A cutting board, A rolling pin, Cookie cutters, A baking tray, Baking paper, Oven mitts.

Steps

1. Wash your hands with soap for twenty seconds, then let's make Gingerbread People!
2. Grown-up step: A grown-up turns the oven on to 350°F.
3. Stir 3 cups of flour, 1 teaspoon of baking soda, 2 teaspoons of ground ginger, 1 teaspoon of cinnamon and ½ teaspoon of salt together in a big bowl.
4. In another bowl, beat ¾ cup of butter and ¾ cup of brown sugar until creamy.
5. Crack 1 egg into the creamy bowl, add ½ cup of molasses and stir.
6. Wash your hands again: raw egg has germs.
7. Stir the dry mix into the wet bowl until a stiff dough forms.
8. Press the dough into a flat disc, cover it and chill it in the fridge for 30 minutes.
9. Dust the board with flour and roll the dough out until it is as thick as your little finger.
10. Press cutters into the dough and lift the shapes onto a lined tray.
11. Grown-up step: A grown-up bakes the cookies for 8 to 10 minutes, until the edges look set.
12. Let the cookies cool on the tray for 10 minutes before you move them.

13. Stir 1 cup of powdered sugar and 1½ tablespoons of cold water into a thick icing.
14. Dab icing on each cookie for a smile, eyes and buttons. Give each one a name!

Safety notes

- Hot! A grown-up does this part.
- Contains milk, eggs, wheat. Swap an ingredient for an allergy where the recipe lists a swap.
- No tasting raw dough or batter: wait till it's cooked.
- Read the label on packets for allergies.
- A bit messy.
- Sticky fingers.

Kitchen science

Baking soda makes bubbles when it meets the acid in molasses, and the oven's heat makes them grow, so the cookies puff a little and turn soft inside.

Make it your own

- Cut the dough into stars, trees or animals instead of people.
- Press raisins or small round candies into the dough for buttons before baking, as long as no child under 4 will eat them.
- Make a gingerbread family: a big cookie and little ones in a row.

Questions about gingerbread cookies

What makes gingerbread taste like gingerbread? Ginger and cinnamon for the spice, and molasses for the dark color and deep sweetness. Brown sugar adds to it.

Why chill the dough? Cold dough is firm, so it rolls without sticking and the cut shapes keep their edges in the oven instead of spreading.

Can I make them without an egg? This recipe uses one egg to hold the dough together. If someone has an egg allergy, look for a recipe written without egg rather than leaving it out.

Is it safe to taste the dough? No. Raw flour and raw egg can carry germs, so wait until the cookies are baked.

Free at peabody.kids/kitchen/gingerbread-cookies