

L & G

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VANILLA BEAN BASE (TWO RECIPES)
SUGAR COOKIE RECIPE

1: a buttery, sable-style sugar cookie that is the perfect base for just about anything

2: a sweet, fluffy, and classic sugar cookie that is perfect paired with royal icing or buttercream

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Ratio #1: Sable

1 : 2 : 2.5 (8oz. : 16oz. : 20oz.)

The above ratio is a variation of a sable roll out cookie. It gives us about one cup of sugar, four sticks of butter, and about five cups of flour. Using this ratio, and testing different amounts, I found that I prefer 250g of sugar (1 1/4 cup) and four sticks of butter, which is one box. The amount of flour can vary depending on how little spread is preferred. I like to stick to 600g-660g of flour.

Another factor is eggs. With this ratio you could do one egg and one yolk, which is my preferred amount of egg. The extra yolk makes the cookie more tender and less crumbly. You could also do two yolks to make an even more tender cookie. Using only two whites would give you a crispier cookie perfect for rolling thinly and baking to be a golden brown.

Baking powder can vary as well. Without it, the cookies don't have much lift, and they can be a bit dense. If you are worried about spread or too much rise in the cookie, a quarter teaspoon is fine. Using a half teaspoon of baking powder will make the cookies lighter.

To flavor this dough, use a good amount of dark vanilla extract and/or vanilla bean paste. Vanilla bean paste is my favorite, because it gives little specks of vanilla bean to the dough and gives the cookies a more rounded vanilla flavor. Any extracts or emulsions will work as well. Use 1-2 tsp. almond extract for a holiday flavor.

This ratio works really well when rolled to 1/4" and baked to a golden brown. It is buttery and amazing paired with buttercream, citrus curds, fillings, and royal icing. Rolling to 5/16" is preferred when decorating with royal icing.

COOKIE RECIPE

452g (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

250g (1 1/4 cup) granulated sugar

1 1/2 tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt

1 egg & 1 egg yolk

1 tsp vanilla bean paste

630g (5 1/4 cups) all purpose flour

1/4 tsp baking powder

Preheat oven to 400.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on low speed until smooth. Add the sugar and salt and beat on low until combined. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl. Add the eggs and extracts and beat until the mixture is fully combined and emulsified.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour and baking powder. Add flour to the butter mixture and beat on low until combined. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl.

Roll the dough to 5/16" between parchment. Refrigerate rolled dough for at least an hour.

*This recipe is written using weight measurements rather than volume because it is a significantly more accurate (and easier) way to measure. Trust me! Get a scale, and you'll be happy.

* Do not substitute the Diamond Crystal Kosher salt with regular table salt. If you only have table salt, reduce by half.

COOKIE RECIPE

Dip cutters in flour and cut shapes in the dough, placing them on a parchment lined baking sheet.

Freeze cut shapes for five minutes before baking.

Bake for 8-10 minutes or until the center is no longer shiny and desired browning is reached.

Cool on sheet pan for about ten minutes, or until set and barely warm to the touch.

Store in an airtight container. The dough and baked cookies can be frozen.

NOTES

- When rolling to 5/16", I can get up to three dozen cookies depending on how many times I roll my dough and how large or small the cookie shapes are.
- To divide this recipe in half, use one egg. If you like, you can remove a bit of the egg white.
- For a lighter cookie, use 1/2 tsp baking powder. I don't recommend removing the baking powder, because without it, the cookie can be dense.
- An additional 30g (1/4 cup) of flour can be added to further prevent any spreading. Alternatively, up to 60g can be removed for a cookie that is very buttery and will spread more. This is helpful when rolling to 1/4" or thinner and the goal is a buttery, golden cookie.
- The recipe calls for unsalted butter, but if you only have salted, it should be fine. Lower the salt by a half teaspoon. Make sure your butter is at room temperature- not cold or out of the fridge, and not soft or melted. Room temperature is about 60-68 degrees and pliable.

Ratio #2: Classic Sugar Cookie

1 : 1 : 1.5 (8oz. : 8oz. : 12oz.)

The above ratio is more of a classic sugar cookie. It gives us about one cup of sugar, two sticks of butter, and about three cups of flour. Using this ratio, we would need 200g of sugar, 226g of butter and 360g of flour. The flour can be increased by 1/4 cup- 1/2 cup (30g-60g). Because I like to work with a base recipe that has an entire box of butter, I double this ratio for my recipe. Doubling this yields about the same as the first recipe, and I prefer that. The amount of flour I use is 750g.

For this ratio, I like to use an entire egg. Doubling that gives us two eggs. Just like with the first recipe, you could use one egg and one yolk, which would cut out some moisture, give a little less spread, and make a more tender cookie. You could do two yolks, but I prefer at least one white for this recipe.

This cookie is a classic sugar cookie, and it is amazing with a little extra baking powder to make it even more 'fluffy'. For that extra fluff, use one whole teaspoon of baking powder. That type of cookie would work well for holidays when decorating with buttercream. For a flatter top, use a half teaspoon.

To flavor this dough, use a good amount of dark vanilla extract and/or vanilla bean paste. Vanilla bean paste is my favorite, because it gives little specks of vanilla bean to the dough and gives the cookies a more rounded vanilla flavor. Any extracts or emulsions will work as well. Use 1-2 tsp of almond extract for a holiday flavor.

This ratio works best when rolled to a thicker size, like 5/16" or 3/8".

COOKIE RECIPE

452g (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

400g (2 cup) granulated sugar

2 tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt

2 eggs

2 tsp vanilla bean paste

750g (6 1/4 cups) all purpose flour

1/2 tsp baking powder

Preheat oven to 400.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on low speed until smooth. Add the sugar and salt and beat on low until combined. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl. Add the eggs and extracts and beat until the mixture is fully combined and emulsified.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour and baking powder. Add flour to the butter mixture and beat on low until combined. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl.

Roll the dough to 5/16" between parchment. Refrigerate rolled dough for at least an hour.

* This recipe is written using weight measurements rather than volume because it is a significantly more accurate (and easier) way to measure. Trust me! Get a scale, and you'll be happy.

*Do not substitute the Diamond Crystal Kosher salt with regular table salt. If you only have table salt, reduce by half.

COOKIE RECIPE

- All of the recipes on my website fall under one of these two categories- buttery base or sugary base. The buttery base (ratio #1) is tender, moist, and crumbly and has a buttery flavor. The sugary base (ratio #2) is soft, fluffier, sweeter, and has a slight chew. Try both recipes to see which you prefer.
- Both recipes make around two to three dozen cookies, depending on the size of the cookies and how many times you re-roll.
- I re-roll my dough only one or two times, and three at the most. Whatever is left after that, I roll between parchment and freeze for sample cookies. You could absolutely continue using it, this is just my preference.
- What I have found to be the best method for re-rolling is to collect the dough from every sheet after I've cut my shapes, and then re-roll all of it together rather than re-rolling several small batches.
- I like to place my semi-cooled cookies on a larger, paper towel lined sheet that has a cover to keep them fresh. I find that the paper towel has prevented butter bleed, since the towels soak up extra oils in the cookie.
- Make sure to check your oven temperature to ensure that it is actually at 400 degrees. My oven is 15 degrees cool, so I need to set my oven to 415 degrees. A cool oven will not allow the cookie dough to set properly, and could cause some spread.
- The thickness of the dough is relative to the temperature of the oven. Most often I roll my cookies to 5/16" and bake at 400 degrees. Lately, however, I have been enjoying a thinner cookie at 1/4". It's totally up to you. However, the 400 degree temperature may be too hot for your cookies. I love a golden bottomed cookie. If you prefer a lighter bottom, bake your 1/4" cookies at 375. Experiment with temperatures to find what works best for you.

ICING RECIPE

1/3 cup meringue powder
2/3 cup water (room temperature)
1/2 tsp Diamond Kosher salt
2 lbs. confectioner's sugar
2-3 tbsp. corn syrup
1-2 tsp Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste (or your favorite brand)
white gel food coloring

Before beginning, wipe down the entire bowl, paddle, and spatula with white vinegar or lemon juice. (Or not, if you're brave.)

Dissolve salt with water in the bowl of a stand mixer. Add meringue powder and hand whisk until foamy and there are no lumps.

Add confectioner's sugar to the bowl and mix on speed level two for five minutes. It will have a honey-like consistency. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.

Add corn syrup, vanilla, and a couple squeezes of white gel coloring. Mix on speed level for for two to three minutes. Icing will be light and fluffy. Cover immediately with cling wrap.

*Feel free to experiment with extracts in your icing. Do not use oil based flavorings, however, because oil will cause the icing to break down. Try Watkins Caramel extract, almond extract, lemon juice, Casa Bella Vida Mexican vanilla, cocoa, coffee extract, and fruit powders.

ICING RECIPE

- * Kosher salt is the key to giving your icing an amazing flavor. Don't skip it.
- * Genie's Dream Meringue powder is my preferred meringue powder. I love the taste as well as the nice finish it gives my cookies. You can absolutely use another brand, this is just my recommendation. I've heard good things about Chefmaster.
- * Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste will give your icing a delicious vanilla flavor without as much of an alcohol taste. It will also give lovely speckles to your icing that will show up on your cookies once they're dry. If you do not want speckles, substitute for regular dark vanilla extract, like McCormick pure vanilla and Heilala regular vanilla.
- * Casa Bella Vida Mexican vanilla blend is a light and marshmallowy flavored vanilla that is clear. You could also substitute this for McCormick pure vanilla (or your favorite dark vanilla extract), but you will not be able to achieve the creamy, light flavor in your icing that only comes from this vanilla. I do not recommend substituting for regular clear vanilla extract, because it is a specific artificial vanilla flavor associated with birthday cake.
- * Watkins caramel extract is excellent in royal icing, especially when paired with cinnamon, apple, and vanilla.
- * The amount of water in this recipe makes a piping (toothpaste) consistency icing. Straight out of the mixer is what I use for my lettering, detailing, and outlining. Lower the amount of water to 1/4 cup or less if you need stiff icing for florals and palette knife painting.
- * Icing can be stored on the counter in an airtight container or in the refrigerator for two weeks, or in the freezer for 2-3 months.
- * To keep icing shiny, keep humidity at 40-50% while the icing is drying.

MANY THANKS

Thank you so much for purchasing my recipe! I have worked so hard to make this the most delicious and easy to work with roll out sugar cookie dough, and I am so thrilled to be putting it in your hands. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to email me at emily@linenandgray.com.

Make sure to tag me on Instagram (@linenandgray) so I can see (and share) all the amazing cookies you bake.

*Thank you so much for your support,
Emily*

THE FINE PRINT

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