



World of Wonder

EXPLORING THE REALMS OF HISTORY, SCIENCE, NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY



By Laurie Triefeldt

Cookies are a holiday tradition for many people. Just the smell of them baking in the oven can revive fond memories of celebrations past. Making cookies is a fun activity that often brings families together. They make great gifts, they're perfect for when holiday visitors call, and you can even decorate with them! So have some fun measuring, mixing, decorating and, of course, eating these homemade, tasty treats.

Sugar cookies

These cookies are traditionally cut into holiday shapes with cookie cutters and decorated with icing and sugar sprinkles. Because there is raw egg in this recipe, you should not eat the dough before it is cooked. This recipe makes 4 dozen cookies.

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) salted butter, softened
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

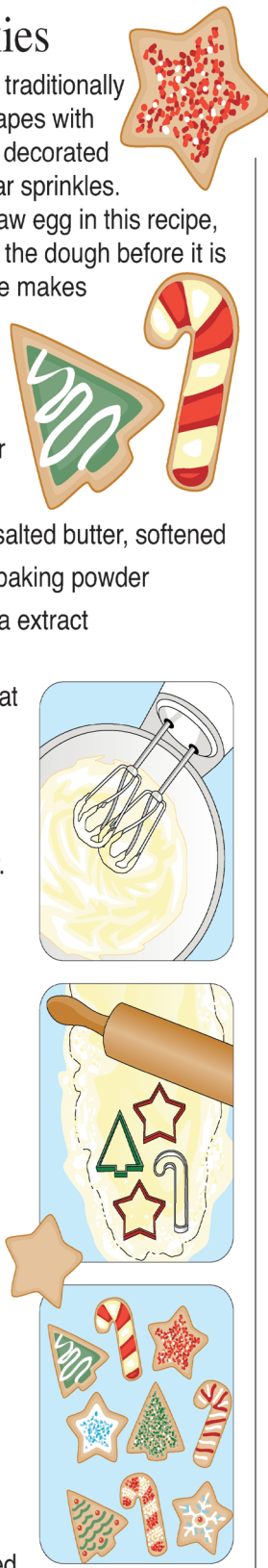
In a large bowl, beat butter, sugar, vanilla and eggs with electric mixer on medium speed, until light and fluffy. Slowly stir in flour until blended.

Divide the dough into four sections. Cover and refrigerate dough for 2 to 4 hours.

When ready to bake, heat oven to 375 degrees. Roll one section at a time to about 1/8 inch thick on a lightly floured surface. (Keep remaining dough refrigerated until ready to roll.)

Cut the rolled dough with assorted holiday cookie cutters. Place about 1 inch apart on nonstick or parchment-covered cookie sheet.

Bake 7 to 10 minutes or until light brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely. Decorate!



Royal icing

Royal icing is perfect for decorating sugar cookies and gingerbread men. It dries to a smooth, hard finish and takes color well. You can buy ready-made icing or follow the recipe below.

Ingredients

- 1 box confectioners' sugar (1 pound)
- 5 tablespoons meringue powder or 2 large egg whites
- 1/2 cup water • food coloring (optional)

Directions

In a large bowl, combine sugar and meringue powder or egg whites.

Add the water and beat with an electric mixer on medium speed for about 6 minutes. The icing is done when it is smooth and can hold a stiff peak on the surface for several seconds. Mix in more sugar for a thicker consistency.

Add a drop or two of food coloring if you wish.

The icing dries quickly, so keep it covered in plastic when not in use.

Icing tips

You will need decorating bags, a coupler and icing tips. Fill the bag about halfway.

Fold and twist the bag closed. Squeeze the icing down into the bag, releasing any air.

To apply icing, gently squeeze the back end of bag with your palm and direct the tip with fingers. It gets easier with practice.

NOTE: Some people like to twist an elastic band on the end of the decorating bag to help keep the icing in.



Gingerbread man

Various cookie-cutter shapes can be used to make this recipe for 18 to 24 cookies.

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 stick soft butter • 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs • 1/4 cup molasses
- 3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Directions

Combine sugar and butter, then blend with an electric mixer on low speed. Add eggs and molasses. Mix well.

In a second bowl, sift flour and stir in the ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.

Gradually combine the dry flour mix to the butter mixture.

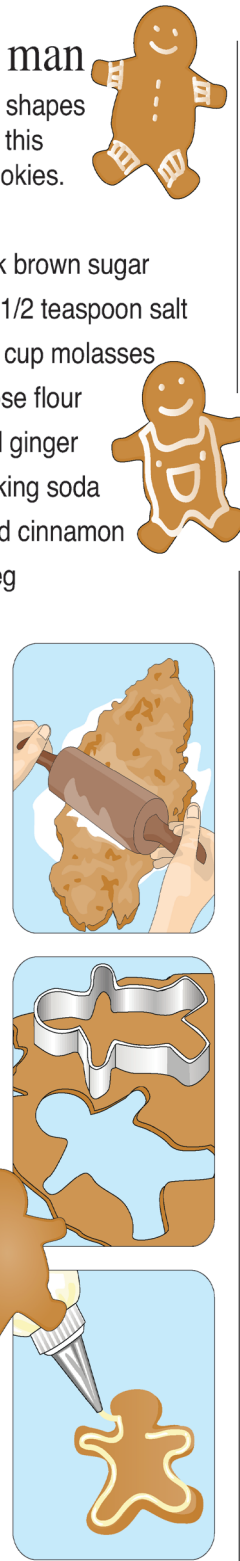
Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Allow the dough to soften at room temperature. Take about 1/2 cup of dough at a time and roll onto a floured surface to about 1/8 inch thick.

Cut gingerbread with cookie cutters. You can re-roll the scraps. Place cookies onto cookie sheets lined with parchment paper, about 1 inch apart.

Bake for 7 to 10 minutes, until just beginning to brown at the edges. Place on wire rack to cool before decorating.



Cranberry Crisps

These nonbake, crispy rice treats are super easy to make, and you can add your own ingredients for that extra-special touch. This recipe makes about 48 small bars.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 5 cups tiny marshmallows
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg or cinnamon
- 6 cups crispy rice cereal
- 1 cup white baking pieces (white chocolate chips)
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts (optional)

Directions

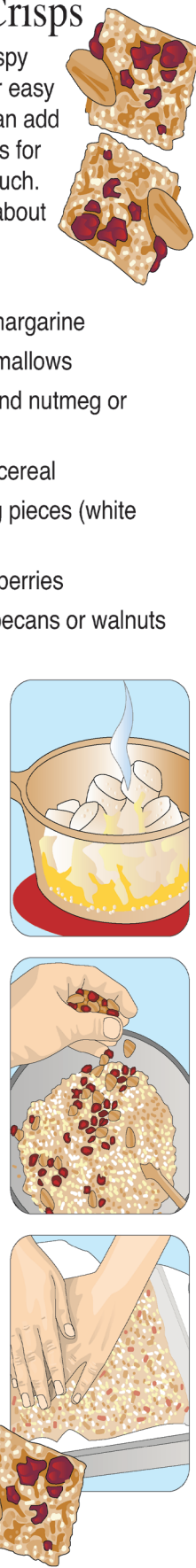
Lightly grease a 13-by-9-inch pan.

Slowly melt butter in large saucepan over low heat. Add marshmallows and nutmeg. Stir until melted and well-blended.

Remove from heat and add cereal, cranberries, white baking pieces and nuts, if desired. Stir until combined.

Scoop mixture into pan. Top with additional nuts, if desired. Use waxed paper or a spatula to press mixture flat.

Let stand for 1 hour, then cut into 2-by-2-inch squares.



SOURCES: *World Book Encyclopedia*, World Book Inc.; www.myrecipes.com; <http://allrecipes.com>; www.foodnetwork.com; *Christmas Cookies*, Better Homes and Gardens Special Interest Publications; www.wilton.com

© 2013 Triefeldt Studios, Inc.
Distributed by Universal Uclick for UFS

LEARN ABOUT **OLYMPIANS** IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF WORLD OF WONDER

CASA GRANDE
Dispatch
Serving Pinal County For More Than A Century

Newspapers
in **Education**



Need Extra Cash?
BUY SELL TRADE



SCAN ME!

FREE Watch Battery Replacement
*SOME BATTERIES EXCLUDED
NO PURCHASE NECESSARY
VALID AT CASA GRANDE PAWN

