

10 HOLIDAY

BAKING TIPS



1. Line your baking pan with parchment paper or foil. The cookies brown nicely and you can transfer the cookies easily and reuse the cookie sheets. And there's less cleanup!
2. Don't use the measuring cup as a scoop or it'll pack the flour and you'll end up with more flour in the cup than intended. Spoon flour into the measuring cup and then run a knife over the top to level the flour.
3. Use the full amount of salt called for in a recipe, especially if you are using unsalted butter. If you use salted butter, use 1/2 the amount called for in the recipe. Don't skip salt, as salt brings out flavors in a recipe.
4. Don't overlook the importance of specific mixing instructions. Small variations in a recipe can make a big difference how the cookie turns out in the end. Sifting flour can make a difference in the texture when it's finished.
5. Shiny heavyweight baking sheets that reflect heat are less likely to produce overbaked cookie bottoms than dark baking sheets that absorb heat.
6. Don't substitute flour types. Cake flour, all purpose flour and bread flour are not the same.
7. When purchasing supplies for your holiday cookie baking, use only the finest ingredients. It's the holidays, and the cookies are for family and friends, so splurge on the best.
8. Use real cane sugar. Read the label: If it doesn't say cane sugar, it's probably beet sugar, which is not as good for baking.
9. The only tricky part of making cookies is baking them properly. And that's simply a matter of watching them carefully, especially as they near the end of their baking time. Resist any temptation to answer the telephone or leave the kitchen.
10. For arranging assortments of cookies, I use platters that are 12 inches across or smaller. Small platters of cookies can be replenished often and look inviting rather than picked over.