

My All-Time Favorite Sugar Cookie: The Brown Sugar Cookie

This recipe doesn't make *those* sugar cookies—you know the ones—sturdy like a shire horse, who can hold up to gallons of royal icing draped over them.

Thanks to generous amounts of vanilla and brown sugar, the resulting cookie is mellow with caramel flavors. Corn starch ensures they crumble delicately, then melt in your mouth.

I've been making these cookies for (counts up years in head, shakes head in disbelief), er, a while. A good long while. They are adapted from one of my all-time favorite cookbooks, *Classic Home Desserts*, by Richard Sax, a thoughtful, genius food writer who died much too early.

Let me know if they change your mind about sugar cookies.

Brown Sugar Cookies

Yield: About 6 dozen cookies (depends on the size of your cookie cutters)

What You'll Need:

2 sticks (8 ounces/229 grams) unsalted butter, cold, cut into pieces

1/2 cup (100 grams) light brown sugar

2 teaspoons real vanilla extract

1 1/2 cup (200 grams) all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

4 Tablespoons (28g) cornstarch

What You'll Do:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, salt and cornstarch.
3. Using a stand/hand mixer, food processor or a wooden spoon and your extremely buff forearms (this is in case Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson is a fan of my recipes), combine the butter, sugar and vanilla and mix until lighter in color (about 2 minutes).
4. Sprinkle the flour mixture over the top and blend (pulse if using a food processor) until just combined and beginning to clump. At this point, i use my hands to bring the dough together in a few quick motions.
5. At this point, if the dough seems very soft, let it chill for an hour before rolling out. If it gets too cold, it will crack and be a pain to roll out (simply leave it on the counter to warm a little at that point.) I often roll them out straight away, so feel free. The dough can be a little fussy (anything so simple, that ends up tasting as nice is allowed to be), so be

sure to flour your board and rolling pin generously. Roll a small portion of the dough at a time to 1/4-inch thick. I usually make them thin and wafer-like. You do you.

6. Cut shapes out of the dough, saving the scraps to re-roll together at the end. Sprinkle with colored sugar or cinnamon sugar. Bake for 8 to 12 minutes, until just golden on the edges. If baking more than one cookie sheet at a time, remember to rearrange the pans back to front and top to bottom once during the cooking cycle.
7. Let cool a few minutes on the baking sheet before transferring to a cooling rack. As members of the shortbread family, these cookies keep nicely for a few weeks, esp. if kept away from people who will eat them.

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