

Recipe Basics

Measure accurately, substitute wisely, adjust carefully

Commonly used abbreviations

t. or tsp.	=	teaspoon
T. or Tbsp.	=	tablespoon
c.	=	cup
pt.	=	pint
qt.	=	quart
gal.	=	gallon
fl. oz.	=	fluid ounce
oz.	=	ounce
lb.	=	pound
pkg.	=	package
doz.	=	dozen
min.	=	minute
hr.	=	hour
mod.	=	moderate
°C.	=	Celsius
°F.	=	Fahrenheit

Equivalent amounts

½ Tbsp.	1 ½ tsp.	¼ fl. oz.
1 Tbsp.	3 tsp.	½ fl. oz.
¼ c.	4 Tbsp.	2 fl. oz.
⅓ c.	5 Tbsp. + 1 tsp.	
½ c.	8 Tbsp.	4 fl. oz.
1 c.	16 Tbsp.	8 fl. oz.
1 pt.	2 c.	16 fl. oz.
1 qt.	2 pt. or 4 c.	32 fl. oz.
1 gal.	4 qt.	128 fl. oz.

For margarine/butter:

1 lb.	4 sticks
1 stick	½ c. or 8 Tbsp.

Additional resources from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

AnswerLine

(www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline)

Call 1-800-262-3804 or (515) 296-5883

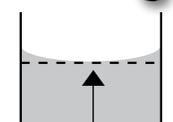
Spend Smart. Eat Smart.®

(spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu)

Practice makes any cook better, but even a first-time cook can achieve success by following a few basic guidelines. Before starting to work, **read** the recipe carefully, **plan** each step, and **gather** all needed ingredients and utensils.

Measure accurately

Fannie Farmer, “the mother of level measurements” had it right when she published her 1896 collection of recipes and insisted on the use of standard measuring cups and spoons. Every recipe requires measuring something; neither fancy tools nor gourmet recipes can make up for careless measuring.



Read at the bottom of the meniscus

Liquid measuring cup

- Used to measure liquid ingredients (milk, water, corn syrup, vegetable oil, etc.)
- Has a rim with a pouring lip above the one cup line
- Marked on one side to read portions of a cup and on the other side to read in milliliters
- Commonly available in glass or plastic 1-, 2-, and 4-cup sizes
- To use: set cup on a flat surface and read measurement at eye level OR use an angled measuring cup (shown at left) that can be read when looking down

Dry measuring cup



- Used to measure dry ingredients (flour, sugar, brown sugar, oatmeal, etc.)
- Has no rim
- Standard set is metal or plastic and includes 1 cup, ½ cup, ⅓ cup, and ¼ cup
- To use: spoon, scoop or dip out the ingredient into the cup; level with the straight edge of a knife or a metal spatula

Measuring spoons



- Used to measure amounts smaller than ¼ cup
- Standard set includes 1 tablespoon, 1 teaspoon, ½ teaspoon, and ¼ teaspoon
- To use: level dry ingredients with the straight edge of a knife or metal spatula

Ingredient hints

Flour is presifted before packaging but settles during transportation and storage; stir before scooping.

Brown sugar should be packed down so that it holds the shape of the cup when removed.

Granulated (white) sugar may have clumps; break apart before measuring.

Vegetable shortening is stored at room temperature; spoon into cup and pack down to remove air pockets; use a rubber scraper to remove measured amount (rinsing cup in water first can make it easier).

Substitute wisely

Using the ingredient specified in the recipe will produce results closest to those intended by the recipe creator. However, it is good to know what substitutions are possible if you are missing an ingredient. In most recipes, making the following substitutions should produce results similar to the original recipe.

If recipe calls for	Try this substitution
Baking powder (1 tsp.)	¼ tsp. baking soda plus ¾ tsp. cream of tartar
Butter, margarine or vegetable shortening in baking (1 c.)	1 c. oil OR ¾ c. applesauce, apple butter, or avocado plus ¼ c. solid fat OR 1 c. ripened/mashed bananas
Chocolate (unsweetened, 1 oz.)	3 Tbsp. cocoa powder plus 1 Tbsp. butter, margarine, or vegetable shortening OR 1 ounce semi-sweet chocolate minus 1 Tbsp. sugar
Cornstarch (1 Tbsp.)	2 Tbsp. flour OR 2 Tbsp. tapioca pearls
Corn syrup (1 c.)	1 c. golden syrup or honey OR 1 c. sugar plus ¼ c. liquid
Cream of tartar (1 tsp.)	1 tsp. white vinegar OR lemon juice
Egg (1)	2 egg whites OR ¼ c. egg substitute
Flour, all-purpose (1 c.)	½ c. whole wheat plus ½ c. all-purpose flour
Flour, cake (1 c.)	¾ c. plus 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
Flour, self-rising (1 c.)	1 c. all-purpose flour plus 1 ½ tsp. baking powder plus ½ tsp. salt
Garlic	1/8 tsp. garlic powder
Honey (1 c.)	1 c. corn syrup OR 1½ c. brown or granulated sugar plus ¼ c. additional liquid minus ½ tsp. baking soda
Lemon juice (1 tsp.)	¾ tsp. lime juice plus ½ tsp. vinegar
Miniature marshmallows (1 c.)	10 large marshmallows
Milk, buttermilk or sour (1 c.)	1 Tbsp. lemon juice or vinegar plus 1 c. regular, soy, or nut milk (let sit at least 10 minutes) OR ⅔ c. plain yogurt plus ⅓ c. milk
Milk, whole (1 c.)	1 c. reduced fat or fat free milk OR 1 c. soy milk OR ½ c. evaporated milk plus ½ c. water
Molasses (1 c.)	1 c. corn syrup, honey, or maple syrup OR 1½ c. brown sugar
Non-dairy coffee creamer (1 Tbsp.)	1 Tbsp. instant dry milk plus 1 Tbsp. water
Sour cream (1 c.)	1 Tbsp. lemon juice plus evaporated milk to make 1 c. (let stand to thicken) OR 1 c. cottage cheese plus 2 Tbsp. milk plus 2 Tbsp. lemon juice (blended) OR ½ c. cottage cheese plus ½ c. yogurt (blended)
Sugar, brown (1 c.)	1 c. granulated sugar plus 2 Tbsp. molasses
Sugar, confectioners or powdered (1 c.)	1 c. granulated sugar plus 1 Tbsp. cornstarch (blended in a food processor using the metal blade attachment until well combined and powdery)
Sugar, granulated (1 c.)	1 c. light brown sugar OR 1 ¾ c. powdered sugar
Tomato juice (1 c.)	½ c. tomato sauce or tomato puree plus ½ c. water
Tomato sauce (1 c.)	1 c. tomato puree OR ½ c. tomato paste plus ½ c. water
Yogurt, plain (1 c.)	1 c. buttermilk, sour cream, or cottage cheese (blended)

Adjust carefully

Often it's easier to make the whole recipe and freeze half or third. If not, use these guidelines.

If recipe calls for	Use this amount to make ½ of total	Use this amount to make ⅓ of total
¼ cup	2 tablespoons	1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon
⅓ cup	2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons	1 tablespoon + 2 ¼ teaspoons
½ cup	¼ cup	2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons
⅔ cup	⅓ cup	3 tablespoons + 1 ½ teaspoons
¾ cup	6 tablespoons	¼ cup
1 cup	½ cup	⅓ cup
1 tablespoon	1 ½ teaspoons	1 teaspoon
1 teaspoon	½ teaspoon	Generous ¼ teaspoon
½ teaspoon	¼ teaspoon	Scant ¼ teaspoon
¼ teaspoon	⅓ teaspoon	Scant ¼ teaspoon

Adapted with permission from University of Nebraska Extension (food.unl.edu/reducing-size-recipes-0).

Reviewed by Ruth Litchfield, PhD, RD, LD, state nutrition and wellness specialist, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

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