



Not-So-Basic Cupcakes + Fun-filled Fruity Fillings, Toppings, Glazes

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 30 / **Cook Time** 18 / **Serves** 6 - 12

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

crack: to break open or apart a food to get what's inside, like an egg or a coconut.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

mash: to reduce food, like potatoes or bananas, to a soft, pulpy state by beating or pressure.

preheat: to set an oven to the desired temperature a few minutes before cooking, so it reaches that temperature by the time you place the food in it.

wet vs dry: to mix wet and dry ingredients separately before combining them: dry ingredients are flours, leavening agents, salt, and spices; wet ingredients are those that dissolve or can be dissolved (sugar, eggs, butter, oils, honey, vanilla, milk, and juices).

whisk: to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Paper cupcake liners
- Large mixing bowl
- Medium mixing bowl (2)
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons

- Liquid measuring cup
- Bowls for fillings and toppings

Ingredients

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- 2 C all-purpose flour **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)****
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking powder
- {1/2 C butter, softened **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance, or coconut cream)****
- 3/4 C sugar
- 2 eggs **** (for EGG ALLERGY sub applesauce OR mashed banana OR ground flaxseeds and warm water—more info below)****
- 1 C milk **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)****
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation flavor—check label)****
- paper cupcake liners
- food coloring, optional
- Glaze:
 - 2 C powdered sugar
 - few T milk (sub dairy-free/nut-free milk) OR lemon, lime, or orange juice
- Filling and Topping Options (depending on ALLERGIES):
 - fruit (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, cherries, bananas, apple, pear, mango, pineapple, citrus, peach)
 - dried fruit
 - honey
 - coconut (shaved, shredded)
 - chocolate (cocoa powder, chocolate chips, chocolate chunks, Hershey Kisses, Hershey Hugs)
 - zest (lemon, lime, orange)

- poppyseeds
- spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, cinnamon sugar, pumpkin pie spice)
- fruit jam (choose fun flavors!)
- fresh mint

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour. Use gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance, or coconut cream for butter. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free butter milk.

Egg: For 2 eggs, substitute 3/4 C applesauce OR 1 large ripe, peeled, and mashed banana OR 2 T ground flaxseeds and 6 T warm water. Stir and soak flaxseeds in warm water for 5 minutes or until fully absorbed and thickened.

Instructions

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preheat + line

Preheat your oven to 350 F and line a muffin pan with paper liners. In a large bowl, measure and mix together the dry ingredients: **2 cups flour**, **2 teaspoons baking powder**, and **1/2 teaspoon salt**.

crack + whisk

Crack **2 eggs** into a medium bowl, and then whisk in the other wet ingredients: **1 cup milk**, **1 teaspoon vanilla**, **3/4 cup sugar**, and **1/2 cup butter**.

combine

Add the dry ingredients to the wet and whisk until well combined.

fillings and toppings

Let kid chefs individually choose their fillings and toppings and chop, mince, or mash them. Then they can stir some into the batter and save a few for toppings.

fill + bake

Fill the muffin pan with the cupcake batter and bake for 16 to 18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Remove the cupcakes and let them cool.

glaze + top

While cupcakes bake, kid chefs can make their glaze with **2 cups of powdered sugar** in a medium bowl and a few tablespoons of milk or citrus juice in a cup to mix in. Kid chefs can decide how thick or thin they would like to make their glaze: add less liquid to the powdered sugar for a thicker, frosting-like consistency. Add more liquid for a thinner, glaze-like consistency.

glaze + top

Let kids have fun creating their unique cupcakes with glaze and toppings, and then eat and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Flour!

Hi! I'm Flour!

"Happy Baking, Friends! I'm Flour, and I'm a VIP (Very Important Powder)! I'm really quite useful (and humble). You can use me to make breads, cakes, cookies, crackers, crumpets, doughnuts, muffins, pancakes, pasta, waffles, and more. (Which is your favorite?) I can coat vegetables and meats before frying them in oil, and you can combine me with a fat to make a roux to thicken sauces and gravies. You can even make play dough and glue with me. Can you see now why I'm a VIP?"

History

Around 8,000 to 15,000 years ago, people discovered that they could crush wheat seeds between simple grindstones to make flour.

When you grind cereal grains, beans, seeds, or roots (like cassava), they become a powder, resulting in flour. Some of the grains besides wheat that can be ground into flour are rye, buckwheat, barley, corn, oat, and rice. Other foods used to make flour are potatoes, acorns, mesquite, cassava, soybeans, garbanzo beans (or chickpeas), amaranth, and even bananas!

Flour is the primary component of bread, and bread is a staple in many countries. Therefore, sufficient amounts of flour are critical, which has caused major economic and political issues at various times throughout history.

Anatomy & Etymology

Before grains are ground into flour, they are whole pieces taken from a plant.

Each kernel of wheat consists of three parts: the coarse outer bran layer (which contains most of the fiber), the germ, and the endosperm. The endosperm stores the grain's starch, a carbohydrate that the body uses to create energy. Other foods that contain starch are potatoes, pasta, and rice.

Whole-wheat flour is the result of grinding or milling the whole grain. It contains all three parts of the kernel—bran, endosperm, and germ.

White flour has been refined or polished and bleached to remove the bran. As a result, white flour has less fiber than whole-wheat flour and fewer nutrients, too.

The word "flour" is originally a variant of the word "flower." Both derive from the Old French "fleur" or "flour," literally "blossom," and figuratively "the finest" (of the milled grain).

How Flour is made

Flour is made in nearly every country in the world.

First, farmers plant wheat seeds, and plants begin to grow. Then, when they are ready to harvest, farmers collect them with giant machines called combines.

Combines cut, separate, and clean the wheat at the same time. The grain must be completely dry before storing, so farmers don't harvest it when it's rainy.

Then, they transfer the flour to a mill (a building where grains are ground into flour), where a miller will oversee the grinding of the wheat grain into flour.

One whole wheat grain makes over 20,000 particles of flour!

Nutrition

Flour contains protein and is a significant source of carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates are a direct source of energy for the body. Our bodies first have to make some changes to the carbohydrates, but then they are quickly converted to energy by our cells.

Fiber helps to keep our intestines happy, feeding the good bacteria in our gut. Whole-wheat, unbleached flour is an excellent source of fiber.

Whole wheat contains essential nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, healthy fats, protein, and fiber. Organic, unbleached flour is the healthiest.

Wheat-free and gluten-free flours are vital to people who have celiac disease, wheat allergies, or gluten intolerance (or non-celiac gluten sensitivity). Varieties of gluten-free flours include those made from: almonds, amaranth, buckwheat, corn, garbanzo beans (or chickpeas), millet, quinoa, rice, sorghum, soybeans, and teff.