

# Cookies, Cakes, and Pies

## OBJECTIVES

- Discover . . .
- how cookies, cakes, and pies fit into a healthful eating plan.
- convenience forms of cookies, cakes, and pies.
- how to prepare and store different kinds of cookies, cakes, and pies.

How many different kinds of cookies can you think of? What about cakes and pies? In all, there are hundreds of varieties. Many originated centuries ago. Every country and culture has its own special baked sweets, which are often a traditional part of celebrations. What are some of your favorites?

## Nutrition Notes

Cookies, cakes, and pies are delicious treats. Although they are high in calories, fat, and sugar, they can be part of a healthful eating plan when eaten in moderation. Most people enjoy cookies, cakes, and pies on special occasions or just now and then.

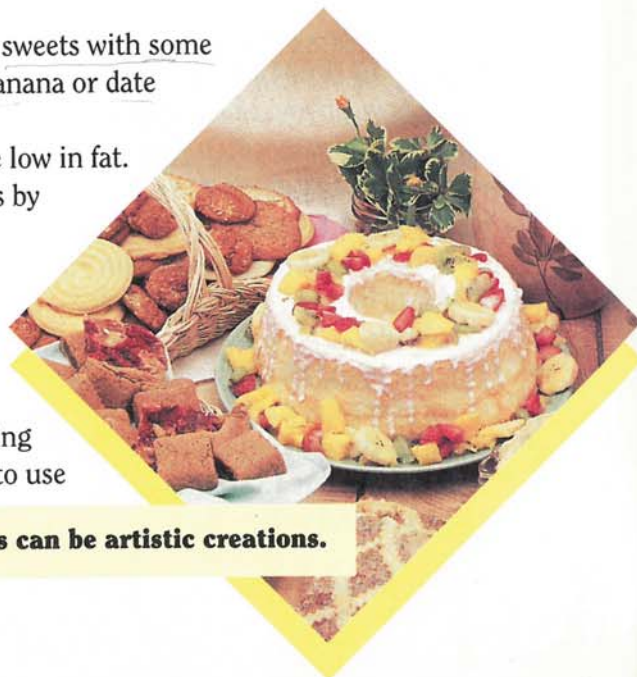
When you do eat these treats, choose wisely. Look for sweets with some nutritious ingredients. Try carrot or oatmeal cookies, banana or date cake, and pumpkin or strawberry pie.

Some cookies, including fig bars and gingersnaps, are low in fat. Angel food cake is too. You can also save fat and calories by choosing pies with only one crust instead of two.

## Consumer Power

Cookies, cakes, and pies can be made from the same basic ingredients as other baked goods. Review the buying and storing information on pages 277-278. Remember to use the specific type of product called for in the recipe. For example, some cake recipes require cake flour.

**Baked treats can be artistic creations.**



## Buying and Storing Convenience Forms

There are many products to help you prepare cookies, cakes, and pies more quickly and easily.

- ◆ Packaged cookie and cake mixes are usually dry. They require the addition of liquids and often other ingredients, such as oil or eggs.
- ◆ Refrigerated cookie dough is ready for baking.
- ◆ Convenience pie crusts can be found in several forms: packaged mixes, dough sticks, ready-to-use rolled pastry, and ready-to-fill frozen pastry shells.
- ◆ Pie fillings may be canned or made from packaged mixes.



**Products such as these can save time in baking. How else might using these products differ from scratch baking?**

When buying, read the labels on these products carefully. Are low-fat varieties available? How do calories and nutrition compare? If you have time, could you bake from scratch and save money?

## Storing Cookies, Cakes, and Pies

Check the labels of convenience products for storage instructions. Proper storage will also let home-baked treats keep their quality longer.

Store crisp cookies and soft cookies in separate containers. For crisp cookies, use a loose-fitting cover. Soft cookies should have a tight-fitting cover to keep them moist.

Cakes with cream fillings are perishable. Store them in the refrigerator. Other cakes can be stored in tightly closed containers at room temperature. Cakes can be frozen for longer storage.

Refrigerate custard and cream pies immediately after baking. If they stand at room temperature, harmful bacteria can grow rapidly. Store fruit pies in the refrigerator and reheat them to serve warm.



**For crisp cookies, use a container with a loose-fitting cover. Soft cookies should be in a tightly sealed container.**

## Food Skills

Baking cookies, cakes, and pies lets you be creative. Many people gain satisfaction from baking treats for special occasions and to give as gifts.

### Cookies

Most cookies are a variation of one of six basic types. The main difference in these types is the way they are shaped.



**Bar cookies** are baked in a square or rectangular pan, just like a cake. After baking, the cookies are cut into bars or squares. Brownies are a popular bar cookie.

**Drop cookies** are made by dropping teaspoonfuls of batter onto a baking sheet. Chocolate chip cookies are usually made by this method.



**Molded cookies** are made from a stiff dough and shaped by hand. One common method is to roll the dough into balls about the size of walnuts. The balls are spaced on a baking sheet and flattened with a fork or the bottom of a glass. Some peanut butter cookies are molded this way.



**Pressed cookies** are made by pushing the dough through a cookie press onto a baking sheet. The cookie press comes with several design plates to give the cookies different shapes. The dough must be stiff enough to keep the shape of the design. Spritz cookies are an example.



**Rolled cookies** are made by rolling out a stiff dough to the thickness specified in the recipe. Then cookie cutters are used to cut shapes. Sometimes the cookies are decorated with colored sugar or frosting.

**Refrigerator cookies** are sliced from a long roll of chilled dough and baked on a cookie sheet.



### **Tips for Making Cookies**

Cookies should be well shaped and delicately browned with a pleasing flavor and texture. Here are some tips for good-looking, good-tasting cookies.

Sometimes dough sticks to the fork, rolling pin, or cookie cutters. Try dipping utensils in flour or sprinkling some on the rolling pin. Use just a little flour. Too much will make the cookies tough and dry.

Make all cookies in a batch the same shape and thickness. If some are thin and some thick, the thin ones will be done before the thick ones.

**How would you rate the appearance of these cookies?**

Check the recipe for how to space cookies on the sheet. Some types of cookies spread as they bake.

Prepare the pan according to recipe directions. Allow hot cookie sheets to cool before using them again. If you put cookie dough on a hot baking sheet, the dough will melt and spread. If you have two cookie sheets, one can cool while the other is in the oven.

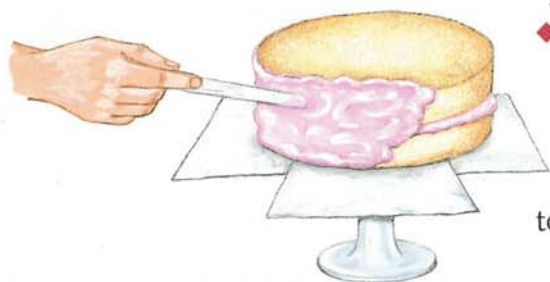
An extra minute or two of heat can overbrown cookies. Watch them carefully. Test bar and drop cookies for doneness by pressing lightly with your finger. The imprint of your finger should show slightly.

Follow recipe directions for cooling cookies. Some can cool in the pan. Others are removed while hot and cooled on a wire rack. Use a wide spatula or turner.



**Warm cookies are fragile, so handle them gently.**

## Cakes



There are two basic types of cakes:

- ◆ *Shortened cakes* contain fat, such as shortening, margarine, or oil. For leavening, they use baking powder or baking soda. Shortened cakes can be baked in round, square, rectangular, or specially shaped pans. Two or more layers may be put together with frosting.



- ◆ *Unshortened cakes* do not include fat or oil. Angel food cake and sponge cake are examples. For leavening, they use the air beaten into egg whites. Most unshortened cakes are baked in a tube pan—a deep, round pan with a tube in the center. The tube helps the heat get to the center quickly so the cake bakes evenly. The pan is left ungreased so the cake can cling to the sides. That helps it rise.

### Tips for Baking Cakes

A properly made cake should have a smooth, slightly rounded top. The inside should be finely textured without tunnels or air bubbles. When you taste it, the cake should be moist, tender, and pleasantly flavored.



**If the top springs back, the cake is done.**

Proper mixing is one key to a successful cake. The mixing method will vary depending on the type of cake and the recipe. Follow directions carefully. Review the other baking principles discussed in Chapter 38.

To test a cake for doneness, check the top. It should be evenly browned. When you tap the top gently, it should spring back. Look at the area where the top meets the sides of the pan. A shortened cake should be pulled away from the sides of the pan. An unshortened cake will continue to cling to the sides of the pan.

**How would you rate the appearance of this cake?**

