

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Gingerbread Cookies (slightly adapted from Gourmet via epicurious)

Makes about 3 dozen, depending on the size of your cookie cutters

I chilled my cut cookies on the baking sheets, before baking, for about 10 minutes before transferring to the oven. This tends to help cut-out cookie retain their shape during baking, but these still puffed quite a bit.

I didn't use the icing recipe linked here. I decorated my cookies with cream cheese frosting because it seemed easier and tastier. It was, but the cookies had to be stored in a single layer to avoid messing up the frosting.

The spices in the original recipe here were pretty mild; next time I'll double them.

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup molasses (not robust)
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (4.67 ounces) packed dark brown sugar
1 tablespoon ground ginger
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground allspice
½ teaspoon ground cloves
2 teaspoons baking soda
16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into tablespoon pieces
1 large egg, lightly beaten
3¾ cups (18 ounces) all-purpose flour, plus more for kneading and dusting
½ teaspoon salt

1. Bring the molasses, brown sugar, and spices to a boil in a 4- to 5-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat, stirring occasionally; remove from heat. Stir in the baking soda (mixture will foam up), then stir in the butter 3 pieces at a time, letting each addition melt before adding next, until all of the butter is melted. Add the egg and stir until combined, then stir in the flour and salt.

2. Arrange a rack in the middle position and heat oven to 350°F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper or a silicone mat.

3. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and knead, dusting with flour as needed to prevent sticking, until soft and easy to handle, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Halve the dough, wrapping one half in plastic wrap; keep at room temperature.

4. Roll out the remaining dough into a 14-inch round ($\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick) on a lightly floured surface. Cut out as many cookies as possible with cutters and carefully transfer them to the prepared baking sheets, arranging them about 1 inch apart.

5. Bake the cookies, one sheet a time, until edges are slightly darker, 8 to 10 minutes. Let the cookies cool for a couple minutes on the pan before transferring them to racks to cool completely. Make more cookies with remaining dough and scraps. Decorate cooled cookies as desired with decorating icing.