

## Shirley Corriher - Cookies Three Ways

### Ingredients

#### Basic:

1 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
2 T butter  
1 1/2 cups flour  
3/4 t salt  
1/4 t baking soda  
10 T fat  
1 cup sugar  
3 T liquid or 1 large egg  
1 T pure vanilla extract  
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips  
Nonstick cooking spray

#### Thin:

1 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
2 T butter  
1 1/2 cups bleached all-purpose flour  
3/4 t salt  
1/4 t baking soda  
10 T butter  
1/2 cup sugar and 1/3 cup light brown sugar  
and 3 T light corn syrup  
2 T milk  
1 T pure vanilla extract  
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips  
Nonstick cooking spray

#### Puffed:

1 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
2 T butter  
1 1/2 cups cake flour  
3/4 t salt  
1 1/2 t baking powder  
9 T butter-flavored shortening  
1 cup minus 1 T brown sugar  
1 large egg  
1 T pure vanilla extract  
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips  
Nonstick cooking spray

#### In Between:

1 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
2 T butter  
1 1/2 cups cake flour  
3/4 t salt  
1 1/2 t baking powder  
5 T butter and 5 T butter-flavored shortening  
3/4 cup light brown sugar and 2 T light corn  
syrup  
1 large egg  
1 T pure vanilla extract  
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips  
Nonstick cooking spray

### Instructions

Roast pecans in 350° oven 10-12'. Remove & stir in 1 T butter. Raise oven to 375°.

Sift together flour, salt, baking soda/baking powder.

Using electric mixer, cream fat and sugar till light & fluffy.

Add corn syrup, if using, then liquid or egg, beat thoroughly.

Beat in vanilla.

On low, gradually add dry ingredients until thoroughly combined.

Repeatedly scrape down sides once with rubber spatula.

Add pecans and chocolate chips by hand with spatula.

Spray cookie sheets lightly with nonstick cooking spray. With small spoon, drop slightly heaped T of batter ~ 2" apart on greased sheets.

Bake ~ 12' until edges just begin to brown.

Remove to a rack, let cool on the sheet ~ 3'

Remove cookies from sheet to rack, let cool completely

## Cookie lab

Baking is a chemical transition (not phase transition like freezing water). Can control parameters to get desired results: baking time & temp, mixing method, ingredients.

Fat: different fats have different water content & melting patterns, will greatly affect shape of cookies. More water content make cookies soft & puffy. Butter & margarine are 81% & 80% fat, lard & shortening are 100% fat. Butter melts over a narrow temperature range (can go from rock hard to soft to melting very quickly). This means in a cookie it will melt shortly after it goes into the hot oven & they will spread. Shortening stays the same consistency over a wide temperature range, so cookies made with shortening or part butter & part shortening will not spread as much as cookies made with all butter. Some "fake fats" & spreads remain the same texture regardless of temperature, so the cookies stay exactly as placed on baking sheet - no spread.

Flour: different flours absorb different amounts of water, so they will affect the shape of the cookie too. High-protein flour soaks up water & makes cookies dry & crisp; they hold together well. Low protein flour that does not soak up water (like cake flour) leaves the water free in the dough to steam in the oven & decreases spread. It is also acidic & chlorinated so the cookies set faster, also decreasing spread. Protein content also affects color: more protein = darker color. (If water contacts flour before it is coated in fat, some gluten will form & make the cookies chewier. This can also help if cookies are too crumbly & tender).

Sugar: type of sugar affects browning & crispness. Corn syrup (glucose) browns at lower temp than table sugar, so substituting a little in the recipe will make them browner. It will also make the surface crisper. In a cookie with high table sugar (sucrose), low moisture, & no acidic content, sugar crystallizes when cooled, turning cookie hard & crisp. Brown sugar can absorb moisture from the atmosphere to make baked products soft; cookies made with brown sugar may soften upon standing. Honey contains a lot of fructose, the sugar in fruits. It is very hygroscopic (likes water) so cookies made with honey soften fast upon standing.

Liquid & egg: careful balance. Small amount of water or liquid can steam for a little puff in the cookie, but too much & the batter thins, causing spread. The eggs set in the oven & hold the cookie together. Some thin batters with extra egg will just puff, not spread. Egg whites can dry out baked goods. You need enough sugar to balance the drying effect of the eggs.

Baking powder & soda: Small amount of powder (1t per cup of flour) or soda (1/4t per cup of flour) contributes to leavening. Powder contains acids & does not neutralize acid from other sources. Acidic dough makes cookies bake faster & spread less. If recipes contain large amounts of soda (3/4t per cup of flour), it does not contribute to leavening but rather neutralizes acid, for better browning.

Heat control: If want cookies to spread less, have dough cold & oven slightly hotter than usual. For more spread, keep dough at room temp & use slightly cooler oven. Cookies overcook easily, so watch for browning at very edges. Use thick baking sheets for even cooking.

### Chocolate chip cookies 3 ways

Thin cookie: Use butter for melt & spread. Use corn syrup for crispness & color, & increase baking soda for good color. More liquid will enhance spread, but with corn syrup only a little milk is needed. Use bleached all-purpose flour which won't absorb a lot of liquid.

Puffed cookie: Use shortening & cake flour. Switch from baking soda to powder to increase acidity (limits spread). Use an egg for liquid for good puffiness, brown sugar to contribute moisture & balance drying effect of egg. Cut fat & sugar a little to limit spread.

In-between: Use half butter & half butter-flavored shortening. Corn syrup for crispness. Cake flour, baking powder, an egg, & reducing sugar limit spreading.

Naomi Logsdon exegesis of Shirley Corriher