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Using and Storing All-Purpose Flour

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Flour measures

- All-purpose flour comes in 5-, 10-, 50- and 100-pound sacks.
- One pound of flour is approximately 3-1/2 cups.
- A 5-pound bag of flour contains 17-1/2 cups.

Flour is the main ingredient in baked products such as cakes, cookies, pastry, quick breads, yeast breads and rolls. It is also used to thicken sauces, gravies and puddings.

To measure flour, spoon it into a measuring cup. As you work, try not to bump the cup with the spoon. This will pack the flour, resulting in more flour than needed. Flour does not have to be sifted before it is measured.

How to store all-purpose flour

Flour must be kept cool and dry. Warm, damp conditions cake and pack flour and provide the right environment for insects to hatch in it.

Flour must be packaged in a vapor-proof material, because it readily absorbs odors. Do not store flour near soap powder, onions or other foods and products with strong odors.

Flour that is properly stored will keep for six to eight months. If you have a large bag of flour to store, try these hints:

- Put the bag in a large container with a tight-fitting lid, such as clean trash can. This will keep out dust, insects, dampness and odors.
- Do not pour the flour directly into a trash can. Trash cans are not made to hold food products and could contaminate the flour with dangerous chemicals.
- Store the container in a cool, dry, dark place. If possible, keep the container off the floor.
- Each time after the bag is opened, squeeze out the air in the bag and tightly roll down the top of the bag.
- When you remove some flour, take out enough to last several weeks. This way the container does not have to be opened frequently. Store this smaller supply in a cool, dark place in the kitchen. If the kitchen is in a warm climate, store flour in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- If freezer space is available, flour can be repackaged in airtight, moisture-proof containers, labeled and placed in the freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit. If flour is stored like this, it will keep well for several years.

Flour is good for you

All-purpose flour is usually enriched with iron and the B vitamins — thiamin, riboflavin and niacin. Iron helps build healthy blood; the B vitamins help the body grow at a normal rate. Read the label on the flour package to check the amounts of each nutrient provided.

Yeast rolls

- About 4 cups flour, unsifted
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 egg

Mix 2 cups of the flour with the sugar, yeast and salt. Heat milk and shortening together over low heat until warm. Stir into flour mixture. Add egg and beat well. Mix in enough of the remaining flour to make a soft dough that leaves the sides of the bowl.

Knead on a lightly floured surface until dough is smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Place in a lightly greased bowl and turn over once to grease upper side of dough. Cover and let rise in a warm place (80 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit) until almost double in size (1 to 1-1/2 hours). Press dough down to remove air bubbles.

Shape dough into 24 balls and place in two greased 9-inch square or round pans or make fancy-shaped rolls. Let rise in a warm place until double in size (about 1 hour). Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit (hot). Bake rolls 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Remove from pan and cool on rack.

Makes 24 large rolls.

Biscuit mix

- 10 cups flour
- 1-2/3 cups instant nonfat dry milk*
- 1/3 cup baking powder
- 2-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1-2/3 cups shortening

Mix dry ingredients thoroughly in large container (6- to 8-quart capacity). Cut in shortening with pastry blender or mixer until fine crumbs are obtained and shortening is well-blended. Store tightly covered in refrigerator. Use within 3 months. Use for muffins, carrot-raisin cookies and tuna pizza. (See other recipes.)

Makes about 15 cups mix.

*** Remember, nonfat dry milk can be used in recipes that call for fluid milk. Measure 1/3 cup milk powder for each one cup of fluid milk called for in the recipe. You can mix this two ways:**

- By adding the necessary amount of water to the powder and stirring to dissolve
- By thoroughly mixing the milk powder with the dry ingredients and adding the right amount of water to the liquid ingredients.

Muffins

- 2-3/4 cups biscuit mix (See biscuit mix recipe.)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 egg

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit (hot). Lightly grease muffin tins.

Stir biscuit mix and sugar. Mix water and egg thoroughly and add to dry ingredients. Stir until barely moistened. Batter

will be lumpy. Fill muffin tins two-thirds full. Bake until lightly browned, about 20 minutes.

Makes 12 muffins.

Tuna pizza

- 3 cups biscuit mix (See biscuit mix recipe.)
- 2 teaspoons oregano leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1-1/2 cups tomato puree
- 1 can (6-1/2 ounces) chunk-style tuna, water-pack, well-drained, flaked
- 1 medium onion, very thinly sliced
- 1 cup process American cheese, shredded

Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit (hot). Lightly grease two large baking sheets or 12-inch pizza pans.

Stir biscuit mix and water together until mix is barely moistened. Knead 15 times on a lightly floured surface. Divide in half. Pat or roll dough into a 12-inch circle on each baking pan. Turn up edge of dough slightly to form a rim. Bake until surface begins to dry, about 6 minutes. Stir oregano and garlic powder into puree. Spread over hot crusts. Sprinkle with tuna and onion and top with cheese. Bake until cheese is melted and crust is golden brown, about 15 minutes.

Makes 8 servings.

Carrot-raisin cookies

- 1/4 cup margarine, softened
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups biscuit mix (See biscuit recipe.)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup raisins, chopped
- 1/2 cup carrot, finely shredded

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (moderate). Lightly grease baking sheet.

Beat margarine and sugar with an electric mixer at medium speed until well blended, about 2 minutes (or 300 times by hand). Add egg and vanilla. Beat well. Add biscuit mix and cinnamon and mix until blended. Add raisins and carrot and mix well. Drop by teaspoons onto baking sheet, about 2 inches apart. Flatten slightly with spoon. Bake until set but not dry, about 10 minutes. Remove from baking sheet while still warm. Cool on rack.

Makes 48 cookies.

Quick coffee cake

- 3 tablespoons softened butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup flour
- 1-1/4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

- 1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (moderate). Lightly grease 8-inch square baking pan.

Mix 3 tablespoons butter or margarine with granulated sugar. Add egg and beat until creamy. Mix flour, baking powder and salt thoroughly. Add to sugar mixture alternately with milk. Add vanilla. Spread batter evenly in baking pan. Mix brown sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over batter. Dot with 2 tablespoons butter or margarine. Bake 25 to 30 minutes.

Makes 6 servings.

Related MU Extension publications

- G7370, Insect Pests of Stored Products
<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G7370>
- MP564, In a Pinch: Ingredient Substitution
<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/MP564>

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