

THE ULTIMATE CUPCAKE GUIDE

BOSTON GIRL BAKES





Although making cupcakes involves some simple ingredients, a lot can go wrong. I love the science behind baking and love teaching people- so this guide is dedicated to helping you achieve the perfect vanilla cupcake every time!

Keep reading to learn how to make the perfect cupcake everytime!

- Heather from Bostongirlbakes.com

ALL ABOUT THE TOOLS

These are the essential tools you need to make the perfect cupcakes!



CUPCAKE PAN

Cupcakes are usually baked in a cupcake pan, or better known as a muffin pan. A muffin pan has typically 12 cavities or wells to place the cupcake batter. Muffin pans come in mini, regular, and jumbo. I recommend you invest in two cupcake pans to be able to rotate one batch out of the oven and place your second batch in the oven. I love and highly recommend my Chicago Metallic 12 Cup Muffin pan for its consistency and durability.

CUPCAKE LINERS

Cupcake liners are typically paper cups you place inside the cavities of the pan that your batter will then be placed in and baked. Cupcake liners serve a couple of purposes. They are functional and will help you remove your cupcakes with ease. They make your cupcakes portable for parties and eating right out of your hand! And they are pretty. You can keep them simple in white, but now liners come in all different colors and patterns to match your mood, or party theme. My favorite liners are these Regency Greaseproof Baking Cups



OTHER ESSENTIALS

Besides the necessary cupcake pans and liners, you will need to stock up your kitchen with the other baking essentials- a set of mixing bowls, measuring cups, measuring spoons, a spatula, and a mixer. I highly recommend a Kitchenaid mixer, but if that isn't in the budget then a good quality hand mixer will do!

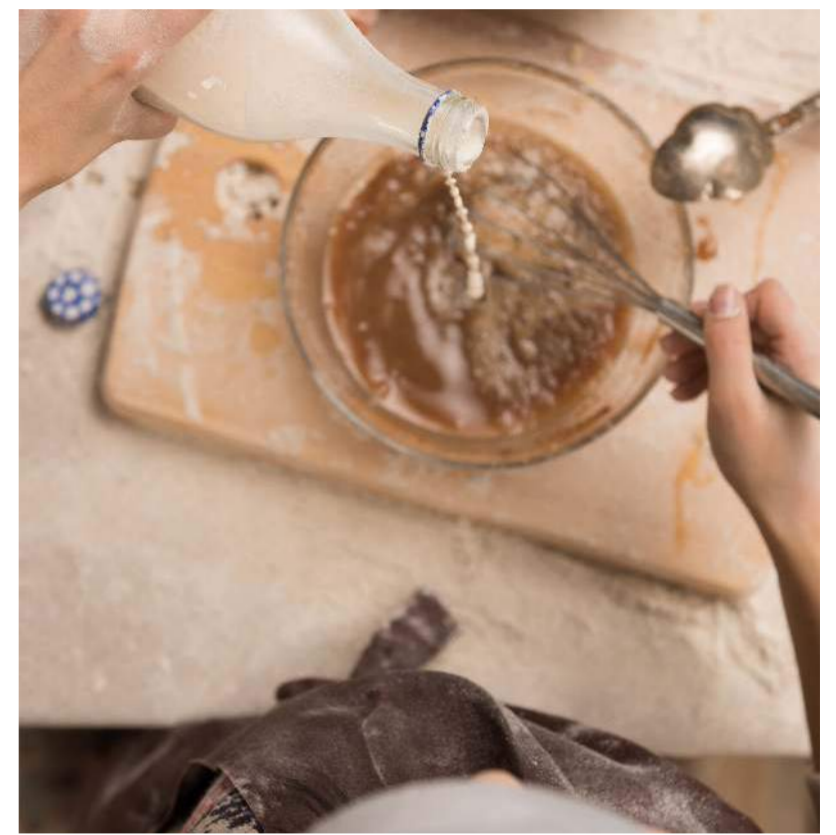
6 TIPS FOR THE PERFECT CUPCAKE



#1 USE THE BEST INGREDIENTS POSSIBLE



#2 USE ROOM TEMPERATURE INGREDIENTS



#3 DO NOT OVERMIX THE BATTER.



#4 USE A SCOOP TO MEASURE EACH CUPCAKE



#5 PRE-HEAT YOUR OVEN, THEN TAKE THE TEMPERATURE



#6 BAKE IN THE CENTER OF YOUR OVEN.

Now how to fix some common cupcake problems...

TROUBLESHOOTING CUPCAKES 101

PROBLEM #1: **My cupcakes are sinking!**

POSSIBLE REASONS WHY:

Too Much Flour.

* Be sure to measure accurately. When it comes to measuring flour, use a spoon to scoop the flour into your cup and then level off the top with a knife.

Under-baked

* You took them out too early. They may have appeared done when you took them out, but it's best to use a cake tester or a toothpick. If it comes out clean then take them out.

You opened the oven door while baking.

* It's tempting to open the door to see how they are doing, but by doing so you let heat escape and can change the oven temperature which can cause your cupcakes to not bake properly.

PROBLEM #2: **My cupcakes are too tender and fall apart!**

POSSIBLE REASONS WHY:

Undermixing

* You under-mixed your batter. Be sure to follow the recipe's instructions as for how long to mix your batter! Set a timer so you do this accurately.

Too Much Of An Ingredient.

* You may have added too much of an ingredient- such as sugar or baking powder/soda causing your cakes to fall part. Be careful and be sure to measure accurately!

Too Few Eggs.

* Just like too much sugar can cause your cakes too fall apart, so can few too eggs. Eggs help bind your ingredients together, so too few eggs and your cakes will too tender and crumble on you!

PROBLEM #3: My cupcakes are tough!

POSSIBLE REASONS WHY:

Overmixing

*Once you have added the flour, mix just enough to incorporate the ingredients. Continuing to mix once the flour has been added, will result in gluten formation which will cause your cupcakes to be tough in texture.

Wrong Type of Flour.

*All flours are not created equally. You cannot swap out all purpose flour for bread flour, or whole wheat and expect the same results. Different flours have different protein contents which can affect the cupcakes' overall texture. For cupcakes it's best to use all purpose or cake flour.

You did not bake right away.

*You've prepared your batter, and then realize yours pans aren't ready, your oven wasn't pre-heated or you have to go out and run some errands. Letting your cake batter sit on the counter and "age" or worse yet, in the fridge overnight can result in a coarse textured cupcake. Be sure to have your pans ready, oven hot, and be ready to bake your cupcakes immediately once you have given it your final stir.

You did not cool them properly.

*Once your cupcakes are baked and you have taken them out of the oven, remove them from their pans and allow them to cool on a cooling rack. Allowing your cupcakes to sit in the cupcake pans, will cause your cupcakes to continue to bake. This could result in a tough dried out cupcake.

PROBLEM #4: My cupcakes are overflowing!

POSSIBLE REASONS WHY:

You overfilled your cupcakes pans.

*Be sure to use a cookie scoop to ensure each cupcake is the same amount. And fill each well about 2/3 full.

Your oven temperature was too low.

* You may have put your cupcakes in before the oven was properly pre-heated, or your oven temperature is inaccurate. Invest in an oven thermometer to be sure.





ULTIMATE VANILLA CUPCAKE RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups cake flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 eggs
- 3 teaspoon pure vanilla extract (or vanilla bean paste, or 2 teaspoons and 1 vanilla bean)

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 350F. Prepare a muffin with cupcake liners. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine your flour, baking powder, and salt. Whisk to combine. In a second mixing bowl with hand mixer (or stand mixer) combine your melted butter and sugar. Mix to combine. Add in your eggs one at a time, whisking to combine after each addition. Add in your vanilla extract. Mix to combine. Alternately, add your sour cream and flour, beginning and ending with your flour. Be careful not to overmix.

Scoop the batter into your prepared pans using a cookie scoop. Fill about 2/3 full. Do not overfill. Bake at 350 for 18-20 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from oven. Remove cupcakes from the pan and allow to cool onto a wire cooling rack before frosting.

A couple notes:

- *For ultimate vanilla flavor use either vanilla bean paste or a combination of vanilla extract and seeds of a vanilla bean.
- * Using a cookie scoop will allow for even sized cupcakes and even baking.
- *If you find your cupcakes are baking unevenly, try rotating your pans halfway through baking.



HOW TO STORE AND FREEZE YOUR CUPCAKES

HOW TO STORE UNFROSTED CUPCAKES:

- * Allow cupcakes to cool completely before storing.
- * Store in a container with a tight-fitting lid.
- * Store at room temperature. Avoid your fridge!
- * Frost within 2 days or freeze for later!

HOW TO STORE FROSTED CUPCAKES

- * Allow cupcakes to cool completely before frosting.
- * After they are frosted, be sure to store them in a tall enough container to not smooch your frosting.
- * You should store your cupcakes up to 3 days at room temperature.

HOW TO FREEZE UNFROSTED CUPCAKES

- * Allow your cupcakes to cool completely.
- * Then wrap cupcakes individually in saran wrap and place in a Ziploc bag. Double wrapping helps to ensure no freezer burn!
- * Freeze!
- * To defrost, unwrap the cupcakes and allow to thaw out.

HOW TO FREEZE FROSTED CUPCAKES

- * Freeze your frosted cupcakes individually uncovered first for about an hour.
- * Individually wrap each cupcake in plastic wrap and store in an airtight sturdy container.
- * Unwrap the cupcakes before thawing them out.



LET'S FROST 'EM!

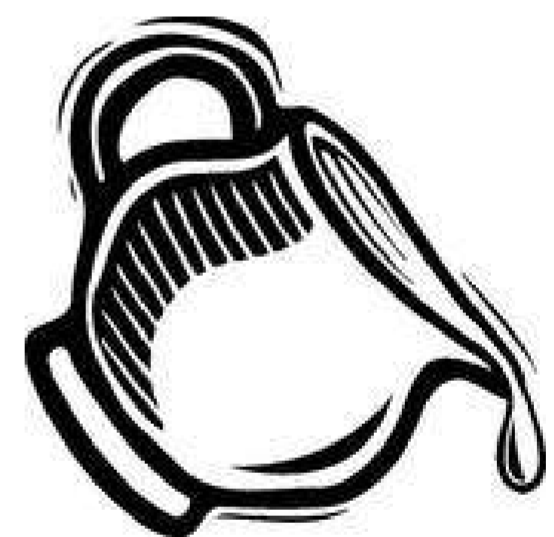
MY GO TO VANILLA BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

Cream 2 1/2 sticks (20 Tbs.) softened butter



Add in 2 1/2 cups confectioner sugar. Mix to combine.

Add in 2 tablespoons of heavy cream (or milk).



Add in 2 teaspoons of pure vanilla extract.



Mix on medium to high speed for 8 minutes!





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CHAMPAGNE CUPCAKES

BANANA CUPCAKES

SALTED CARAMEL APPLE

WITH CINNAMON BUTTERCREAM

For more frosting help check out this video!

HOW TO FROST THE PERFECT CUPCAKE!