

How to Make Great Biscuits



Recipes, Techniques, and Tips for Great Biscuits

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The Prepared Pantry

How to Make Great Biscuits

Biscuits are a staple for many families. They are quick and easy and go with almost any meal. But there are a few principles that will assure you better biscuits. Today, we'll share those principles and methods with you.

You'll find a nice collection of recipes in this book. Biscuits don't have to be plain nor do they have to be made with buttermilk or shortening. They can be made with sour cream, cream cheese, even cottage cheese. You can add cheddar cheese or mashed potatoes. And you can make fancy biscuits like cranberry nut biscuits or apricot orange biscuits. And with these fancy biscuits, when does a biscuit become a scone. We'll tell you that too.



We hope you enjoy this e-book and use it often.

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Exploring the World of Biscuits

One of the joys of baking is the opportunity to experiment, to create your own sensations, what seems good to you and will please your family. You've probably all done that with muffins and scones, adding fruit or nuts, or toppings to make them ours. What about biscuits? For some reason, when we think of biscuits, we think of classic buttermilk biscuits, tall and hot and slathered with butter and a little honey. There is no reason that we can't add to basic biscuits just like we do to scones.

Biscuits are most often rolled out and cut as scones are but usually in round or square shapes. One of the attractions of biscuits is how quickly they can be made. Drop biscuits, biscuits made with a soft batter and spooned onto the baking sheet, save the steps of rolling and cutting. Drop biscuits are "fast food" from scratch.

Below are recipes for drop biscuits and rolled and cut biscuits but these recipes can be made either way simply by altering the liquid. You will also find available mixes.



Principles for Great Biscuits

Understand these principles for great biscuits and yours will always be a success.

1. Make certain that your oven is hot—usually 425 degrees. The hot oven gives the dough a burst of steam that helps make the biscuits light and airy.
2. Measure your baking soda carefully and use buttermilk when called for. The alkaline baking soda reacts with the acid buttermilk creating bubbles and a lighter texture. There is not enough baking soda to completely react with the buttermilk so the tangy taste of buttermilk still comes through.
3. Measure your flour properly. The density in your flour mixture will affect the amount of liquid needed. If you spoon light flour into the measure, it should be about right for the liquid noted in the ingredients.
4. Make the biscuits of uniform size and shape so that they will bake uniformly. Protruding bits of dough can be pushed back in with a wet finger.

Most biscuit recipes call for fresh buttermilk. You may also use [dry buttermilk powder](#) and the prescribed amount of water.

Nine Keys to Biscuits

Key #1: Use the right flour. Use either a soft, low-protein flour meant for biscuits—White Lily—or an all-purpose flour. Do not use bread flour. (See the next section for more about flour and other ingredients.)

Key #2: Keep your ingredients cold. Temperature is critical to buttery, flakey scones. Start with very cold butter—it should chip when you cut it into chunks—or cold shortening and your liquids should be ice cold. Work with the dough quickly to keep it cool.

Why do your ingredients need to be cold? The objective is to keep the butter a solid and not let it melt into a liquid. If your dough is kept cold, it will have little bits of dispersed butter. In the heat of the oven, that butter melts into the dough but leaves pockets and layers in the biscuits.

Key #3: Don't over-work your dough. Kneading converts the protein to gluten. Mix only until the ingredients come together into a combined mass.



Key #4: Make your biscuits thick. Use a folding technique. For flakey, layered biscuits, use a folding technique. Roll the dough out to about 3/8-inch thick. Fold the dough in half and in half again and again. Roll the dough out to about 3/4-inch thick before cutting the biscuits. The biscuits will approximately double in height when baked.

Roll the dough to a uniform thickness so that they will bake evenly.

Key #5: Use a wet dough. A moister dough will rise easier. Don't use any more flour than what you need to handle the dough. It's okay to dust your hands and the counter with flour before rolling or patting the dough.

Key #6: Cut your dough properly. Space the cuts as close together as possible. Reworked scraps will not be as tender as the first cut biscuits since the dough has been worked more. Consider cutting squares or triangles so that you have fewer scraps. If you do so, use a ruler for uniform biscuits. If you use a round cutter, don't twist the cutter as you cut out the biscuits; press straight down. That way they will tend to rise rather than spread.

Key #7: Place your biscuits close together. Place your biscuits close together on the pan, touching each other.

Key #8: Use a hot oven. Make certain that your oven is hot and bake your biscuits at 425 degrees or above. The hot oven gives the dough a burst of steam that helps make the biscuits light and airy.

Key #9 Don't over-bake your biscuits. Over-baking for even a minute or two will dry your biscuits out. As soon as the edges begin to turn brown, remove them from the oven. Immediately, place the biscuits on a wire rack—the hot pan will continue to dry the biscuits.

The Prepared Pantry makes just-add-water biscuit mixes. These are quick, easy, and nearly foolproof. You don't need to cut butter or shortening into the dough. Try [Buttermilk Biscuit Mix](#), [Sour Cream and Chive Biscuit Mix](#), or [Cheddar Cheese Biscuit Mix](#).

What's the Difference between Biscuits and Scones?

There's a fine line between biscuits and scones. It's true that your English scones look different than your Southern Buttermilk Biscuits but there is not that much difference between the two. And if you shape your biscuits like scones and scones like biscuits, it's hard to tell the difference.



Biscuits and scones are often mixed and baked the same way. Often scones are cut into wedges and biscuits are cut with around cutter or are made with a wetter batter and dropped. We often use a round biscuit cutter for both scones and biscuits.

Typically, scones are made with egg and are a little sweeter. Often scones have fruit or nuts added and may be drizzled with a glaze. But you can add fruit and nuts to a biscuit recipe also. (Some would say that if you, do your biscuits just become scones.)

Scones originated in Scotland; biscuits are thought of as an American food.

If you would like to fancy up your biscuits, add a touch of sugar, some fruit, and maybe some nuts. You can cut them into squares, wedges, or cut them round with a biscuit cutter. You can drizzle a glaze over them. Are they then scones? Does it matter?

Both biscuits and scones can be made from a mix. Biscuit mixes are typically packaged in bulk so that you can make as many as you like. Scone mixes are usually packaged for a single batch. You can see [a selection of biscuit mixes](#) here and [a selection of scone mixes](#) here.

What follows are a typical biscuit recipe and a typical scone recipe.

English Scones with Currants

4 cups all purpose flour
1 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 cup butter cut into pieces
3/4 to 1 cup currants
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 egg
2/3 cup half or half, condensed milk, or buttermilk

For the Topping:



3 tablespoons butter, melted
1/2 cup sugar

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Grease a large baking sheet or cover it with parchment paper.

1. In a large bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, sugar, salt and cinnamon. Use a pastry knife to cut the butter into the dry ingredients and continue cutting until the mixture is coarse and uniform. Stir in the currants.
2. In another bowl, stir together the vanilla extract, the egg, and the milk. Form a well in the dry ingredients and pour in the liquid mixture. Stir to combine then remove to a floured counter and knead until uniform. (Do not over-knead. Too much kneading will develop the gluten in the flour and make the scones tough.)
3. Divide the dough into two pieces and press each into 3/4 inch thick circles. Cut each circle into six wedges and place them on the prepared baking sheet. Melt the 3 tablespoons of butter and brush on the scone wedges. Sprinkle them with the sugar to cover.
4. Let bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until the tops are lightly browned. Remove to a rack to cool.

Southern Buttermilk Biscuits

3 cups pastry flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 cup cold butter
1 1/3 cup fresh buttermilk or reconstituted from [buttermilk powder](#)

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the butter until the mixture forms coarse pieces.
3. Add the buttermilk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 3/4-inch thickness and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet with the edges touching.
5. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 large biscuits

California Apricot Orange and Related Fancy Biscuits

Biscuits don't have to be fancy. You can add fruit and nuts, even put frosting on them.

Let your imagination reign. Whatever you desire, you can add to biscuits. They can be sweet with fruit or savory with cheese, onions, bacon, sun dried tomatoes and more. The following recipe is an example of a sweet fancy biscuit.



What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)
3. [Dried Diced Apricots](#)

Baker's notes:

The following recipe can be used to make fancy biscuits. You can also make fancy biscuits with a biscuit mix. We make a [buttermilk biscuit mix](#), a [sour cream and chive biscuit mix](#), and a [cheddar cheese biscuit mix](#). These mixes are just-add-water and you should have them in your oven in about five minutes.

While these biscuits were made with fresh buttermilk, you may also use [dry buttermilk powder](#) and prescribed amount of water.

Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoons salt
zest from one orange
1/4 teaspoon coriander or 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 pound (one stick) cold butter

1/2 cup quality dried apricot pieces, finely chopped
1 large orange sectioned and cut into 1/2-inch pieces

3/4 cup buttermilk (approximately)

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Grease a baking sheet.

1. Measure the flour by scooping some into a bowl and then spooning the flour into the measuring cup. (If you measure packed flour, you will have too much.)
2. Add the baking powder, baking soda, sugar, salt, zest, and spice and stir these ingredients into the flour. Slice the cold butter into the flour mixture. Use a pastry knife or two kitchen knives to cut the butter into the flour mixture. Work the butter into the flour mixture until you have a coarse, grainy mixture. Add the apricot and orange pieces.
3. Make a well in the middle of the flour and pour the buttermilk into the flour mixture. Stir until just moistened. You may need to adjust the amount of buttermilk depending on how much juice from the orange is incorporated in the dough.
4. Pat the dough into a 3/4-inch thick slab. Cut out the biscuits and place them on the baking sheet.
5. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the biscuits just begin to brown. Remove the biscuits from the baking sheet and place them on a wire rack to cool.

Understanding Baking:

1. The hot oven gives the dough a burst of steam that helps make the biscuits light and airy.
2. The alkaline baking soda reacts with the acid buttermilk creating bubbles and a lighter texture. There is not enough baking soda to completely react with the buttermilk so the tangy taste of buttermilk still comes through.
3. The density in your flour mixture will affect the amount of liquid needed. If you spoon light flour into the measure, it should be about right for the liquid noted in the ingredients.
4. Make the biscuits of uniform size and shape so that they will bake uniformly. Protruding bits of dough can be pushed back in with a wet finger.

How to Make Drop Biscuits

You can make light, fluffy buttermilk biscuits in a jiffy—without rolling and cutting the dough.

In some parts of the country, buttermilk biscuits are a staple. But when you don't have the time to roll and cut the dough, make drop-style biscuits. Here's how.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)



Baker's notes:

The following recipe can be used to make drop biscuits. You can also make drop biscuits with a biscuit mix. We make a [buttermilk biscuit mix](#), a [sour cream and chive biscuit mix](#), and a [cheddar cheese biscuit mix](#). These mixes are just-add-water and you should have them in your oven in about five minutes.

While these biscuits were made with fresh buttermilk, you may also use [dry buttermilk powder](#) and prescribed amount of water.

Easy Drop Biscuits

2 cups all purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 pound (one stick) cold butter
1 cup plus one tablespoon buttermilk



Directions:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Grease a baking sheet.

1. Measure the flour by scooping some into a bowl and then spooning the flour into the measuring cup. (If you measure packed flour, you will have too much.)
2. Add the baking powder, baking soda, sugar, and salt and stir these ingredients into the flour. Slice the cold butter into the flour mixture. Use a pastry knife or two kitchen knives to cut the butter into the flour mixture. Work the butter into the flour mixture until you have a coarse, grainy mixture. (See picture.)
3. Make a well in the middle of the flour and pour the buttermilk into the flour mixture. Stir until just moistened. The dough should be of a consistency like drop cookie dough or just a bit stiffer. If it is not moist enough, add another tablespoon of buttermilk.
4. Spoon the dough into twelve rounded mounds on the baking sheet leaving room for expansion.
5. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the biscuits just begin to brown. Remove the biscuits from the baking sheet and place them on a wire rack to cool.

Understanding Baking:

1. The hot oven gives the dough a burst of steam that helps make the biscuits light and airy.
2. The alkaline baking soda reacts with the acid buttermilk creating bubbles and a lighter texture. There is not enough baking soda to completely react with the buttermilk so the tangy taste of buttermilk still comes through.
3. The density in your flour mixture will affect the amount of liquid needed. If you spoon light flour into the measure, it should be about right for the liquid noted in the ingredients.
4. Make the biscuits of uniform size and shape so that they will bake uniformly. Protruding bits of dough can be pushed back in with a wet finger.

Texas Sour Cream Biscuits

Biscuits can be made with sour cream instead of buttermilk. Sour cream is acidic like buttermilk and will react with baking soda. Unlike buttermilk, sour cream is high in fat and in this recipe, is used in place of shortening.

Because there is not enough baking soda to completely neutralize the sour cream, the biscuits still have a touch of tang.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Baker's notes:

While these biscuits were made with fresh sour cream, you may also use [dry sour cream powder](#) and prescribed amount of water.

Ingredients

3 cups pastry flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup cold sour cream
1 1/3 cup milk

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the sour cream until the mixture forms coarse pieces.
3. Add the milk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 3/4-inch thickness and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet with the edges touching.
5. Bake for about 16 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 large biscuits



Sunday Best Cream Cheese Biscuits

You make these biscuits just as you would biscuits made with butter or shortening. The principles are the same.

These are very special biscuits. The cream cheese makes them extra light and moist. Biscuits are always best right out of the oven but these will keep longer than most.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Baker's notes:

The following recipe can be used to make these biscuits. You can also make biscuits with a mix. We make a [buttermilk biscuit mix](#), a [sour cream and chive biscuit mix](#), and a [cheddar cheese biscuit mix](#). These mixes are just-add-water and you should have them in your oven in about five minutes.

These biscuits can be made with fresh buttermilk, you may also use [dry buttermilk powder](#) and prescribed amount of water.

3 cups pastry flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
4 ounces cream cheese, cold
1 1/2 cups buttermilk

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the cream cheese until the mixture forms coarse pieces.
3. Add the buttermilk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 3/4-inch thickness and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet with the edges touching.
5. Bake for about 14 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 large biscuits



Bar J Potato and Ranch Biscuits

This is another biscuit recipe that uses mashed potatoes. The potatoes make these biscuits moist and light.

We intended to make drop biscuits but after a try or two, ended up with cut-out biscuits. The dough is wet and you have to dust the counter well with flour as well as your biscuit cutter and your hands but they worked perfectly. The wet dough allowed the otherwise heavy biscuits to rise into very nice biscuits and the dusting of flour made them attractive.



Because the dough is wetter than for most cut biscuits, it tends to stick to the cutter. We used a biscuit and donut cutter so that we could push the cut dough from cutter using the hole in the top of the cutter. A can with both ends cut out will work also.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups pastry flour
1 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup ranch dressing
1 cup mashed potatoes
1 egg, beaten
3/4 cup milk
flour for dusting

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. Mix the flour, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl. Set aside.
2. In another bowl, combine the ranch dressing, mashed potatoes, egg, and mix together. We used a whisk to combine these ingredients.
3. Make a well in the dry ingredients and pour in the wet ingredients all at once. Stir with a spatula only until mixed. Do not over-mix.
4. Turn the dough out onto a floured counter and pat the dough with a floured hand into a 3/4-inch thick slab. Use a biscuit cutter to cut rounds. With a thin spatula, move the rounds to greased baking sheet.
5. Bake for ten to twelve minutes or until they start to brown. Serve hot.

The Prepared Pantry makes just-add-water biscuit mixes. These are quick, easy, and nearly foolproof. You don't need to cut butter or shortening into the dough. Try [Buttermilk Biscuit Mix](#), [Sour Cream and Chive Biscuit Mix](#), or [Cheddar Cheese Biscuit Mix](#).

Cheddar Potato Biscuits

These are very good biscuits. The mashed potatoes make the biscuits moist yet they are light. The cheddar cheese and ranch dressing gives these a kick of flavor.

Because the dough is wetter than for most cut biscuits, it tends to stick to the cutter. We used a biscuit and donut cutter so that we could push the cut dough from cutter using the hole in the top of the cutter. A can with both ends cut out will work also.



What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Baker's notes:

If you would like more flavor, you can add either [pure cheddar cheese powder](#) or [Cheddar Booster](#).

The Prepared Pantry makes just-add-water biscuit mixes. These are quick, easy, and nearly foolproof. You don't need to cut butter or shortening into the dough. Try [Buttermilk Biscuit Mix](#), [Sour Cream and Chive Biscuit Mix](#), or [Cheddar Cheese Biscuit Mix](#).

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup sharp cheddar, grated
1/4 cup ranch dressing
1 cup mashed potatoes
1 egg, beaten
3/4 cup milk
flour for dusting

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. Mix the flour, baking power, salt, and grated cheese together in a large bowl. Set aside.
2. In another bowl, combine the ranch dressing, mashed potatoes, egg, and mix together. We used a whisk to combine these ingredients.

3. Make a well in the dry ingredients and pour in the wet ingredients all at once. Stir with a spatula only until mixed. Do not over-mix.
4. Turn the dough out onto a floured counter and pat the dough with a floured hand into a 3/4-inch thick slab. Use a biscuit cutter to cut rounds. With a thin spatula, move the rounds to greased baking sheet.
5. Bake for ten to twelve minutes or until they start to brown. serve hot.

Country Cottage Cheese Biscuits

Biscuits are a delightful combination of flour, fat—either butter or shortening, and a liquid—often buttermilk. But instead of butter or shortening, you can use cottage cheese.

The addition of cottage cheese to this buttermilk biscuit recipe makes these biscuits particularly rich, crusty, and light. They are scrumptious with a tart jam. We recommend [Loganberry Jam](#) or [Continental Cherry Jam](#).



What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Ingredients

2 cups pastry flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup cold butter
3/4 cup cottage cheese
1/2 to 2/3 cup buttermilk

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Grease a large baking sheet.

1. Mix the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt together in a medium bowl. Cut the cold butter into chunks and then cut the butter into the flour mixture with a pastry blender.
2. Make a well in the middle of the flour mixture and add the cottage cheese and buttermilk. (Start with 1/2 cup buttermilk and add more if needed.) Stir with a fork until the mixture comes together into a mass.
3. Roll or pat the dough into a slab 1/2 to 3/4 inches thick on a lightly floured counter. With a floured biscuit cutter, cut the dough into shapes. Place the biscuits on the prepared baking sheet.

4. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until they have a golden crust. Remove from the baking sheet and serve hot.

Baker's note: For softer biscuits, place the biscuits on the sheet so that the edges are touching. For crustier biscuits, leave room for the dough to expand during baking.

Chunky Cheddar Cheese Biscuits

One of the national restaurant chains serves a great cheddar biscuit. We tried to duplicate it. We think this is every bit as good.

It's hard to get enough cheese in a bread to make it really cheesy without a little help. We accented the cheese with a touch of white pepper, garlic, and mustard. The combination didn't overwhelm the cheese and yet was piquant enough to not be bland.



What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Baker's notes:

The following recipe can be used to make these biscuits. You can also make biscuits with a mix. We make a [buttermilk biscuit mix](#), a [sour cream and chive biscuit mix](#), and a [cheddar cheese biscuit mix](#). These mixes are just-add-water and you should have them in your oven in about five minutes.

Our cheddar cheese biscuit mix is made with [real cheddar cheese powder](#) and [Cheese Booster](#). You can use these instead of the fresh cheddar or to supplement the fresh cheeses.

Ingredients

2 cups pastry flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon ground dry mustard
4 tablespoons cold butter
1 1/2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese lightly pressed into the measure
1/2 red bell pepper, diced and sautéed or steamed in the microwave until it is almost tender
1 3/4 cups buttermilk or enough to make a soft batter

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Grease a baking sheet.

1. Measure the flour by scooping some into a bowl and then spooning the flour into the measuring cup. (If you measure packed flour, you will have too much.)
2. Add the baking powder, baking soda, sugar, salt, pepper, garlic, and mustard and stir these ingredients into the flour. Slice the cold butter into the flour mixture. Use a pastry knife or two kitchen knives to cut the butter into the flour mixture. Work the butter into the flour mixture until you have a coarse, grainy mixture. Add the cheese and bell pepper.
3. Make a well in the middle of the flour and pour the buttermilk into the flour mixture. Stir until just moistened. The dough should be of a consistency like drop cookie dough or just a bit stiffer. If it is not moist enough, add another tablespoon of buttermilk.
4. Spoon the dough into twelve rounded mounds on the baking sheet leaving room for expansion.
5. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the biscuits just begin to brown. Remove the biscuits from the baking sheet and place them on a wire rack to cool.

Classic Buttermilk Biscuits

When I lived in the South, I was surprised how often buttermilk biscuits came to be served. But I learned to love them. This recipe makes the biscuits I loved.

In this recipe, acidic buttermilk reacts with baking soda, an alkaline, to make tall light biscuits. Because there is not enough baking soda to completely neutralize the buttermilk, the biscuits still have a touch of tang.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Ingredients

3 cups pastry flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
3/4 cup cold butter
1 1/3 cup fresh buttermilk or reconstituted from buttermilk powder

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the butter until the mixture forms coarse pieces.



3. Add the buttermilk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 3/4-inch thickness and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet with the edges touching.
5. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 large biscuits

Southern Baking Powder Biscuits

Basic biscuits can be great biscuits. These are straightforward, relying only on baking powder for leavening.

These are simple biscuits to make with only five ingredients. If you wish to use self-rising flour, you can make these biscuits with only three ingredients.

They will rise tall and are slightly salty with no added sugar. If you like, you may add a tablespoon or two of sugar—but then they wouldn't be authentic Southern biscuits.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)



Baker's notes:

The following recipe can be used to make these biscuits. You can also make biscuits with a mix. We make a [buttermilk biscuit mix](#), a [sour cream and chive biscuit mix](#), and a [cheddar cheese biscuit mix](#). These mixes are just-add-water and you should have them in your oven in about five minutes.

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup cold shortening
1 1/2 cup milk

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the shortening until the mixture forms coarse pieces.

3. Add the milk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 3/4-inch thickness and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet with the edges touching.
5. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 large biscuits

Cranberry Nut Biscuits

We took our basic buttermilk biscuit recipe for drop biscuits and added cranberries, nuts, spices, orange zest, and a little more sugar. It is not overly sweet, more like bread with fruit and nuts. If you want sweet bread, increase the sugar to 1/4 cup.



What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)
3. [Dried cranberries](#), chopped

2 cups all purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 pound (one stick) cold butter
3/4 cup dried cranberries, chopped
1/2 cup walnut pieces
1 tablespoon orange zest
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1 1/2 cups buttermilk or enough to make a soft batter

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Oil a baking sheet.

1. Measure the flour by scooping some into a bowl and then spooning the flour into the measuring cup. (If you measure packed flour, you will have too much.)
2. Add the baking powder, baking soda, sugar, and salt and stir these ingredients into the flour. Slice the cold butter into the flour mixture. Use a pastry knife or two kitchen knives to cut the butter into the flour mixture. Work the butter into the flour mixture until you have a coarse, grainy mixture. (See picture.) Stir in the cranberries, walnuts, zest, and spices.
3. Make a well in the middle of the flour and pour the buttermilk into the flour mixture. Stir until just moistened. The dough should be of a consistency like drop cookie dough or just a bit stiffer. If it is not moist enough, add another tablespoon of buttermilk.

4. Spoon the dough into twelve rounded mounds on the baking sheet leaving room for expansion.
5. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the biscuits just begin to brown. Remove the biscuits from the baking sheet and place them on a wire rack to cool.

The Prepared Pantry makes just-add-water biscuit mixes. These are quick, easy, and nearly foolproof. You don't need to cut butter or shortening into the dough. Try [Buttermilk Biscuit Mix](#), [Sour Cream and Chive Biscuit Mix](#), or [Cheddar Cheese Biscuit Mix](#).

Pigs in a Blanket

When I was a child, my mother made pigs in a blanket. She wrapped biscuit dough around little canned sausages. My brothers and I weren't too keen on the sausages but somehow, wrapped in a crunchy biscuit, they were okay. I now know that you can make pigs in a blanket without those canned sausages; fried link sausages or hot dogs work fine. A narrow strip of cheddar makes them even better.



We used our classic butter-based biscuit recipe and hot dogs to make these pigs in a blanket.

What you'll need:

1. [A baking sheet](#), preferably a dark one that will not reflect the heat.
2. [A pastry knife](#) or [pastry knife](#)

Ingredients

3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons cold butter cut in pieces
1 1/3 cups buttermilk

hot dogs or sausages
prepared mustard (optional)
cheddar cheese (optional)

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.

2. Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in the butter until the mixture forms coarse pieces.
3. Add buttermilk and stir the mixture with a fork until most of the dry ingredients have been moistened. Turn the ingredients onto the counter and knead and fold until the dough is formed. Do not knead longer than necessary.
4. Roll or pat the dough to about 1/4-inch thickness and cut into a circle with a biscuit cutter for small sausages or into oblong or rectangular pieces for hot dogs. (The tendency is to roll the dough to thick. Remember that the dough will double in thickness when baked.)
5. Place a hot dog or sausage on each. For hot dogs, slice the dogs lengthwise about half-way through the dog. Place mustard or a cheese stick in the opened dog.
6. Fold the dough around the dog or sausage. Place the biscuits on a greased baking sheet.
7. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes or until the tops are just golden brown and biscuits sound hollow when gently tapped. Serve warm

The Prepared Pantry makes just-add-water biscuit mixes. These are quick, easy, and nearly foolproof. You don't need to cut butter or shortening into the dough. Try [Buttermilk Biscuit Mix](#), [Sour Cream and Chive Biscuit Mix](#), or [Cheddar Cheese Biscuit Mix](#).