



image by Jennifer Pollen (Unsplash)

STUDY GUIDE: BAKERY STYLE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Why spend \$4 on a single treat?
Here's how to be a smart cookie
& ace your next batch at home.

By: Lynn Priestley

Everyone who has ever been to New York City raves about **Levain Bakery**, and rightly so. Their chocolate chip cookies are to die for. They're decadent and gooey and approximately the size of a softball. They're also \$4 a piece. Everyone swears that they're worth it, and don't get us wrong. They are incredible. But here's the secret. **We know how to make cookies that are just as good, and waaaaay cheaper.** (And, when you make them yourself, you can make them as big as you want.)



COOKIE DOUGH 101

So look. We're obligated to tell you not to eat raw cookie dough, because eggs can have salmonella, but if we're being honest, our test kitchen ate a lot of raw cookie dough while recipe testing. This dough is so good, it might not even survive the time it takes for the oven to preheat.

DRY INGREDIENTS

- all purpose flour
- baking soda
- table salt
- coarse sea salt
- chocolate chunks

WET INGREDIENTS

- unsalted butter
- sugar
- brown sugar
- egg, plus egg yolk
- vanilla

- 1 Preheat the oven to **375°**, and line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Whisk flour and baking soda together, then set to the side.
- 2 Brown your butter. Once it has cooled, add sugar, salt, and vanilla, and whisk until smooth. Add egg and egg yolk, then whisk according to the "whisk it" instructions on **page 4**.
- 3 Stir in chocolate chips and any additional mix-ins (see "go nuts" on **page 4**), and make sure there are no hidden flour pockets still surviving anywhere in the dough. (*Flour pockets are the enemy.*)
- 4 Divide dough into roughly 3 tablespoon-sized balls and separate between baking sheets. **Bake for 10-14 minutes**, rotating sheet halfway through baking time. Transfer baking sheet to wire rack, and allow to cool completely before serving. (*Or eat piping hot, we aren't your boss.*)



Oven, Spatula, and Stand Mixer icons by Tawny Whatmore from the Noun Project

WHISK IT.

The key to good cookie dough is how you whisk the butter, sugar, and eggs. Whisk for 30 seconds, then rest for 3 minutes. Repeat this whisk-then-rest process 3 times. The mixture will be thick, smooth, and shiny (*and your forearms will be super buff*).



GO NUTS.

Mix-in to mix up your dough. Chopped nuts can add a layer of complexity. Maybe toasted coconut for a bit of tropical flair? Or add butterscotch or peanut butter chips! The possibilities are endless.



HOT TIPS.

Always make sure to preheat your oven, no matter what you're baking! If the oven is changing temperature while your baked-good-babies are inside, it's a recipe for disaster.



TRICKS TO LEVEL UP

The saying goes that the devil is in the details. We'd like to argue that a well-baked cookie is also in the details. To really get an A+ on your recipe test, study up on these star student tips. Your cookies will be king of that PTA bake sale in no time. (*Karen's reign is over.*)

GET A LITTLE SALTY.

Don't be afraid of **adding some sea salt to top off your cookies**. Sprinkling a bit of coarse sea salt over top when they're fresh out of the oven adds a contrasting, crunchy texture to the soft cookie. Salt also helps things taste sweeter! Sounds like a lie, we know. But trust us. (*It's science. If you want to know how sodium ions suppress bitter flavor compounds, Google it. It's actually pretty neat.*)

BUTTER? BROWN IT.

To brown butter: Melt two-thirds of your recipe's butter in a skillet (preferably a lighter-colored pan, so you can gauge the browning process). Once melted, swirl the pan consistently until butter is golden brown and has a nutty aroma (roughly 1-3 minutes). Transfer to a bowl and stir in the remaining third of your butter until that's melted too. *Behold, you've just made liquid gold.*



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