



## “TASTES LIKE CHRISTMAS” COOKIES

*A classmate took a bite of these chocolate-peppermint cookies and exclaimed, “These taste like Christmas!” The name stuck. To make regular chocolate cookies, omit the peppermint extract and substitute more chocolate chips in place of the peppermint bits.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (240 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 ¼ cups (106 g) unsweetened cocoa
- 2 tsp (12 ml) baking soda
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- 1 cup (230 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (200 g) brown sugar, packed
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 tsp (6 ml) peppermint extract
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp (36 ml) milk
- 1 ½ cups (255 g) chocolate chips
- 1 cup (140 g) Andes® Peppermint Crunch Baking Chips

*High-altitude: Reduce granulated and brown sugars by 1 Tbsp each. Add 2 Tbsp flour. Reduce baking soda by 1 tsp. Add more milk if dough is still too thick.*

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## SNICKERDOODLES

*These buttery snickerdoodles are thick and chewy—all without shortening! If desired, they are easily made dairy-free: replace the butter with ½ cup (105 g) refined coconut oil.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups (180 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp (3 ml) baking soda
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) cream of tartar
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- ½ cup (115 g) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup (67 g) brown sugar, packed
- 1 egg, room temperature
- ½ tsp (3 ml) vanilla extract

### TOPPING

- 2 Tbsp (36 ml) granulated sugar
- 2 tsp (12 ml) ground cinnamon

*High-altitude: Reduce brown sugar to ¼ cup.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and extracts, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. By hand, stir in the milk, then fold in the chocolate chips and peppermint baking chips. Cover and chill dough for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Press a few chocolate chips onto the top of each ball, if desired. Bake for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until the top and edges have begun to set. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes 3 to 4 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla extract, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. Cover and chill dough for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon.

Using a medium cookie scoop, roll dough into balls. Roll the balls in the cinnamon-sugar mixture and then place onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until cookies have begun to brown but are still soft in the center. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.*

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## CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY COOKIES

*This recipe is based on the famous White Chocolate Raspberry cookies made by Selma's for Disneyland. They require a little more work to swirl in the raspberry jam, but the end result is pure bliss.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (240 g) + ½ cup (60 g) all-purpose flour, divided
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) baking soda
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) baking powder
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) cream of tartar
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- ½ cup (115 g) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (100 g) brown sugar, packed
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk, room temperature
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) almond extract
- About 4 Tbsp (59 ml) raspberry jam or preserves, divided
- ¾ cup (128 g) white chocolate chips
- ¾ cup (128 g) semi-sweet chocolate chips

*High-altitude: Reduce granulated and brown sugars by ½ Tbsp each.*

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## SOFT GINGER-MOLASSES COOKIES

*Spicy-sweet, rich, soft, and chewy—everything you could want is in this classic holiday cookie! Adapted from King Arthur Flour.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 ½ cups (420 g) all-purpose flour
- 2 ¼ tsp (13 ml) baking soda
- 1 tsp (6 ml) salt
- 1 ¼ tsp (7 ml) ground cinnamon
- 1 ¼ tsp (7 ml) ground cloves
- 1 tsp (6 ml) ground ginger
- 1 cup (230 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (120 ml) molasses
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- sparkling white (coarse) sugar or granulated sugar, for coating

*High-altitude: Add 2 Tbsp flour. Reduce baking soda to 1 tsp. Reduce granulated sugar by 1 Tbsp.*

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## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine 2 cups (240 g) flour, baking soda, baking powder, cream of tartar, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, egg yolk, and extracts, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. If dough is still sticky, add in flour 1 Tbsp at a time until desired consistency is reached. By hand, fold in chocolate chips.

Scoop out ¼ of the dough into a smaller bowl. Add about 1 Tbsp of jam or preserves and cut it in using a butter knife. Be careful not to overmix the dough—jam or preserves should be roughly swirled in, not completely incorporated into the dough.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of raspberry-swirled dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for approximately 10 to 12 minutes, or until cookies have begun to brown but are still soft in the center. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

Repeat previous 2 steps until all of the dough is used.

*Makes approximately 3 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, spices, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in molasses. Beat in eggs, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. Cover and chill dough for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, roll dough into balls. Roll the balls in sugar and then place onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for approximately 9 to 11 minutes, or until the top and edges have begun to set. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 3 dozen cookies.*

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## FRUITY PEBBLES PUDDING COOKIES

*Putting cereal in a cookie totally makes it breakfast food, right? These sweet and soft rainbow cookies have all the right crunch in all the right places. Adapted from Crazy for Crust.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 ¼ cups (270 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp (6 ml) baking soda
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- ¾ cup (173 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- 1 3.4-oz (96 g) package instant vanilla pudding mix\*
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla extract
- 2 cups (72 g) Fruity Pebbles cereal
- 1 cup (170 g) white chocolate chips

*High-altitude:* Add 2 Tbsp flour. Reduce baking soda to ½ tsp. Reduce granulated sugar by 1 Tbsp.

\*Do not prepare the pudding mix as instructed on the box! You will be placing the powdered mix directly into the dough. Other pudding mix flavors that would work well are French vanilla, cheesecake, or white chocolate.

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## PEANUT BUTTER WHITE CHOCOLATE PRETZEL COOKIES

*These cookies are easy to make and easily adapted. Omit the pretzels, roll the dough balls in sugar, and top with a chocolate wafer after baking to make peanut butter blossoms, or substitute the pretzels with chocolate chips, chopped candy bars, etc. The dough is naturally dairy- and gluten-free, too!*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (270 g) creamy peanut butter\*
- ¾ cup (150 g) brown sugar, packed
- ¼ cup (50 g) granulated sugar
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 ½ tsp (9 ml) vanilla extract
- ½ tsp (3 ml) baking soda
- ½ tsp (3 ml) salt
- 1 cup (237 ml) white chocolate- or yogurt-covered pretzels, roughly chopped\*\*

*High-altitude:* Reduce granulated and brown sugars by ½ Tbsp each.

\*Store-bought peanut butter has a better structure; natural or homemade peanut butter may be too oily and cause cookies to spread.

\*\*Chop according to your desired cookie size—smaller pieces for smaller cookies, larger pieces for larger cookies.

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## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add the pudding mix and beat until well-blended, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Beat in eggs and vanilla extract.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. By hand, fold in Fruity Pebbles and white chocolate chips.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for approximately 9 to 11 minutes, or until the edges are slightly browned. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 3 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a large mixing bowl, add all ingredients except pretzel pieces and stir with a spoon to combine. (Alternatively, you may use a handheld or stand mixer.) By hand, fold in pretzel pieces.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a large plate. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 3 hours and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Place balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, spaced at least 2 inches apart. Flatten slightly using a fork. Bake for approximately 7 to 9 minutes, or until the top and edges are barely set (even if they look slightly underbaked in the center—they will firm up as they cool). Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.*

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## SUGAR COOKIES

*These thick and chewy sugar cookies aren't the same as decorated, crunchy cut-out cookies. They're beautiful just the way they are! If you like your sugar cookies frosted, skip rolling them in sugar and top with your favorite buttercream frosting (and sprinkles, of course) after they've cooled.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ cups (300 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp (6 ml) baking soda
- ½ tsp (3 ml) baking powder
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- 1 cup (230 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 ½ cups (300 g) granulated sugar
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp (18 ml) vanilla extract
- sugar or sprinkles, for coating

*High-altitude:* Add 2 Tbsp flour. Reduce baking soda to ½ tsp. Reduce baking powder to ¼ tsp. Reduce granulated sugar by 1 ½ Tbsp.

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## OATMEAL RUM RAISIN COOKIES

*Have your booze and eat it, too! You'll need a bit of patience with these cookies—the longer the raisins soak, the better. If you want to make regular oatmeal raisin cookies, soak the raisins in warm water for 10 to 15 minutes to plump them up. Or skip the raisins entirely and use chocolate chips!*

### INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cup (112 g) raisins
- ¼–½ cup (60–120 ml) golden, dark, or spiced rum
- 1 cup (120 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp (3 ml) baking soda
- ½ tsp (3 ml) salt
- ¾ tsp (4 ml) ground cinnamon
- ½ cup (115 g) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (100 g) brown sugar, packed
- 2 tsp (12 ml) molasses
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla extract
- 1 ½ cups (135 g) quick-cooking oats

*High-altitude:* Add 1 Tbsp flour. Reduce granulated and brown sugars by ½ Tbsp each.

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla extract, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. If dough is too sticky, add in flour 1 Tbsp at a time until desired consistency is reached. Cover and chill dough for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, roll dough into balls. Roll the balls in sugar and then place onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are slightly browned. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 3 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

Place raisins in a plastic or glass container and cover them with rum. Cover the container and let the raisins soak for at least 2 days and up to 1 week, shaking the container or stirring the raisins halfway through the soaking time. The raisins should absorb almost all of the rum.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in molasses. Beat in egg and vanilla extract, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. Mix in rum-soaked raisins and oats. Cover and chill dough for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. If you refrigerated the dough, you may need to flatten the dough balls a bit. Bake for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are slightly browned. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes 2 to 3 dozen cookies.*

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## SHORTBREAD THUMBPRINTS

*These buttery vanilla cookies are filled with fruit preserves and topped with a simple glaze. Plan ahead—the dough takes at least 4 hours to chill and the cookies need to cool completely before being glazed.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (230 g) unsalted butter
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (134 g) granulated sugar
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp (1–3 ml) almond extract\*
- 2  $\frac{1}{8}$  cups (255 g) all-purpose flour
- pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (180 g) fruit jam or preserves\*\*

### GLAZE

- 1 cup (120 g) powdered sugar
- 1–2 Tbsp (6–12 ml) cream or milk, plus more as needed
- 1 tsp (6 ml) vanilla or almond extract

*High-altitude:* Add 1 to 2 Tbsp flour.

\*If you do not particularly enjoy almond extract, use the smaller amount. Otherwise, use the larger amount.

\*\* Raspberry pairs beautifully with almond, but feel free to use your favorite flavor.

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## BIRTHDAY CAKE GOLDEN OREO COOKIES

*Serious sweet tooths ONLY! These cake batter-flavored cookies are studded with Golden Oreo pieces and white chocolate chips (and sprinkles, for good measure). Adapted from Sally's Baking Addiction.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (160 g) all-purpose flour
- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (190 g) yellow or vanilla boxed cake mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp (3 ml) baking soda
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp (1 ml) salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (170 g) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (100 g) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (100 g) brown sugar, packed
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp (9 ml) vanilla extract
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (115 g) white chocolate chips
- 10 Golden Oreos or vanilla sandwich cream cookies, chopped or crushed into pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (80 g) sprinkles\*

*High-altitude:* Add 1 Tbsp flour. Reduce granulated and brown sugars by  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp each.

\*The sprinkles that work best are jimmies and confetti. Nonpareils bleed quickly and may produce an undesirable color.

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## DIRECTIONS

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter on high speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add the sugar and extracts and beat on medium speed, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour and salt. Beat until a soft dough has formed. Press the dough down to compact it and tightly cover with plastic wrap. Chill dough for at least 4 hours.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a small cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Make an indentation in each ball using your thumb or the back of a measuring spoon. (If the dough cracks, smooth it out with your fingers.) Fill each with a scant ½ teaspoon of jam.

Bake for approximately 12 to 14 minutes, or until barely browned on the edges. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely. Allow to cool for at least 30 minutes before glazing.

To make the glaze, whisk the powdered sugar, 1 Tbsp cream (or milk), and extract together until smooth. Add more liquid if consistency is too thick. Drizzle over cooled cookies.

*Makes approximately 2 to 3 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cake mix, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla extract, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. Add chocolate chips, Oreos, and sprinkles. Mix on low until just combined. Cover and chill dough for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Shape the cookie dough balls to be slightly taller than they are wide. Press a few chocolate chips or Oreo pieces onto the top of each ball, if desired. Bake for approximately 9 to 12 minutes, or until the edges are slightly browned. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes 2 to 3 dozen cookies.*

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## COTTEY MONSTER COOKIES

One of the many wonderful things to come out of Cottey College, these chewy peanut butter oatmeal cookies are bursting with goodies! To make the dough dairy-free, replace the butter with refined coconut oil or margarine. To make the dough gluten-free, use gluten-free oats. Adapted from *The Best of Cottey Cooking* by Michael Richardson.

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 Tbsp (87 g) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (134 g) granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (134 g) brown sugar, packed
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 4 tsp (24 ml) vanilla extract
- 1 cup (270 g) creamy peanut butter
- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp (7 ml) baking soda
- 3 cups (270 g) quick-cooking oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (104 g) M&M'S
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (85 g) chocolate chips
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (85 g) peanut butter chips

*High-altitude:* Reduce granulated and brown sugars by  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp each. Reduce baking soda to  $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp.

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## CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

There are as many definitions of a “perfect” chocolate chip cookie as there are people who eat them! This recipe is for thick, chewy, soft chocolate chip cookies, best enjoyed with a tall glass of milk or a scoop of vanilla or cinnamon ice cream on top.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups (330 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp (18 ml) corn starch
- 2 tsp (12 ml) baking soda
- 1 tsp (6 ml) salt
- 1 cup (230 g) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{7}{8}$  cup (175 g) brown sugar, packed
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (150 g) granulated sugar
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 Tbsp (18 ml) vanilla
- 2 cups (340 g) chocolate chips

*High-altitude:* Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup flour. Reduce corn starch to 2 tsp. Reduce baking soda to 1 tsp. Reduce brown sugar to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup.

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## DIRECTIONS

Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, vanilla extract, and peanut butter. Beat for 1 to 2 minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

Add the baking soda and oats and mix well. By hand, fold in M&M'S and chips. Cover and chill dough for at least 30 minutes and up to 3 days.

Preheat oven to 350° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 15–25° F (8–14° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. If you refrigerated the dough, you may need to flatten the dough balls a bit. Press a few chocolate chips or M&M'S onto the top of each ball, if desired. Bake for approximately 10 to 13 minutes, or until the edges are slightly browned. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes approximately 3 dozen cookies.*

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## DIRECTIONS

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, corn starch, baking soda, and salt. Set aside. Using a handheld or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla extract, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

With the mixer speed on low, gradually add flour mixture. By hand, fold in chocolate chips. Cover and chill dough for at least 4 hours and up to 5 days.

Preheat oven to 365° F (177° C). *High-altitude:* Increase temperature by 10° F (5–6° C) and reduce baking time as necessary.

Using a medium cookie scoop, drop balls of dough onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Press a few chocolate chips onto the top of each ball, if desired. Bake for approximately 8 to 10 minutes, or until cookies have begun to brown but are still soft in the center. Leave on the sheets for a few minutes, then remove to cooling racks to cool completely.

*Makes 3 to 4 dozen cookies.*

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## COOKIE BAKING TIPS

*These are the general guidelines I follow to get thick, soft, and yummy cookies. You certainly don't need to do all of these to make something delicious, though—just choose what works best for you!*

Read through the entire recipe before starting. Be sure you have all of the ingredients and enough time to complete the recipe.

Measure ingredients by weight to ensure you have the correct amount. This will also help with consistency from batch to batch, too. King Arthur Flour's site has a handy master weight chart for many ingredients. They also have an excellent guide for baking at high altitudes.

Use high-quality ingredients (particularly when it comes to chocolate and cocoa). Your cookies will only be as good as the ingredients you use.

Using unsalted butter will ensure that you will put the same amount of salt in each time. However, if you aren't worried about being consistent, salted butter is fine: just subtract ¼ tsp salt from the recipe for every stick of salted butter that you use.

Bring eggs to room temperature by placing them in warm water. (This is also a good way to test the freshness of the eggs—if they sink completely or sink and stand up a little bit, they're good; if they float to the top, they have gone bad.)

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## COOKIE BAKING TIPS

Use imitation vanilla for cookies. The nuanced flavor compounds in natural vanilla extract begin to bake off at around 280 to 300 degrees. Imitation vanilla has only one flavor: vanillin (the predominant flavor in vanilla), and it doesn't bake off in cookies. (For everything else, use the real stuff if you can!)

Make sure your leaveners (baking soda, baking powder, cream of tartar) are fresh, otherwise your cookies won't rise very much.

Line your cookie sheets with parchment paper to make cleanup quick and easy.

Use a cookie scoop to make cookies uniform in size. It is also faster than using a spoon.

The wetness of the dough indicates how much cookies will spread. Wet and sticky dough will spread quite a bit; dry and firm dough won't spread much at all.

Chilled dough spreads slower than room-temperature dough. Refrigerating dough results in thicker, softer cookies.

Use an oven thermometer to be sure you are baking your cookies at the correct temperature. Some ovens can vary by as much as 50° F!

Drop cookies are easy to adjust for size. Just bake larger cookies a little longer and smaller cookies a little shorter! If your cookies are especially large, make sure the prepared dough is puck-shaped rather than perfectly round so that it bakes evenly.

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