

Easy Basic Pancakes



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Prep Time:

5 mins

Cook Time:

15 mins

Total Time:

20 mins

Servings:

4

This surprisingly quick and easy pancake recipe has been our most popular for years—and with good reason. You'll only need a handful of basic fridge and pantry ingredients like all-purpose flour, sugar, eggs, butter, and milk, and pulling together the simple batter takes just five minutes. As the pancakes cook, transfer them to the oven to keep warm, then stack them high and serve with plenty of softened butter and maple syrup.

Start with our basic recipe, or try one of our variations using buttermilk or yogurt. Either way, you'll have fluffy, golden pancakes ready to eat in less than half an hour.

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

How to Make Fluffy Homemade Pancakes Every Time

- **Use fresh ingredients.** Check your flour and [baking powder](#) to make sure they haven't expired or gone rancid.
- **Don't over-mix.** When combining your wet and dry ingredients, whisk only until you no longer see any dry spots of flour. Over-mixing will make pancakes tougher (since gluten develops in the flour) and less fluffy (which happens when leaveners release bubbles).
- **Let batter rest.** Resting about 10 minutes allows the leaveners to continue to work their magic, creating and expanding into thousands of tiny pockets of carbon dioxide. The fluffier the batter, the fluffier the pancakes.
- **Start with a hot surface.** Allow your skillet or [griddle](#) to fully heat up before you add batter.
- **Make a test pancake.** This is your practice run to gauge and adjust the temperature and cook time. Peek frequently at the underside to check if the pancake is browning at the right pace.
- **Don't press the pancakes.** It's tempting to press down on the pancakes with a spatula after flipping, but this will result in a dense, gummy pancake.

Cooking the pancakes in butter can cause the milk solids to burn, leaving behind black specks and a noticeable flavor. For that reason, we prefer to use oil for this and other pancake recipes.

How to Tell When Pancakes Are Ready to Flip

For golden, fluffy pancakes that are neither gummy inside or overcooked, wait to flip them until you see several bubbles on the surface—and a few that have already burst—which should take about 2 minutes. The batter should begin to look slightly dry, especially along the outer edge of each pancake.

After flipping, let them cook for an additional minute or so, then peek at the second side. When it looks equally golden, remove the pancakes and transfer them to a warm oven until you're ready to serve. It'll take less time to cook the second side than the first, so stay close by and have that spatula and an oven-proof plate ready to go.

Cook Mode (Keep screen awake)

- 1 cup all-purpose flour, (spooned and leveled)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, or vegetable oil
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Assorted toppings, such as butter, maple syrup, confectioners' sugar, honey, jams, preserves, sweetened whipped cream, or chocolate syrup

Directions

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

1. Preheat oven:

Preheat oven to 200°F. Have a baking sheet or heatproof platter ready to keep cooked pancakes warm in the oven.

2. Mix dry ingredients:

In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt; set aside.

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

3. Mix wet ingredients:

In a medium bowl, whisk together milk, butter (or oil), and egg.

4. Combine wet and dry ingredients:

Add dry ingredients to milk mixture; whisk until just moistened. (Do not overmix; a few small lumps are fine.)

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

5. **Heat and oil skillet or griddle:**

Heat a large skillet (nonstick or cast-iron) or griddle over medium. Fold a sheet of paper towel in half, and moisten with oil; carefully rub skillet with oiled paper towel.

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

6. **Spoon batter onto skillet or griddle:**

For each pancake, spoon 2 to 3 tablespoons of batter onto skillet, using the back of the spoon to spread batter into a round (you should be able to fit 2 to 3 in a large skillet).

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

7. **Cook first side:**

Cook until surface of pancakes have some bubbles and a few have burst, 1 to 2 minutes.

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

8. **Flip pancakes:**

Flip carefully with a thin spatula, and cook until browned on the underside, 1 to 2 minutes more.

Credit:
Diana Chistruga

Choose a thin, broad spatula (the same width as the pancakes, if possible) and turn each one over as gently and quickly as possible. The second side should take less time than the first, so keep an eye on them.

9. **Serve immediately, or keep warm in oven:**

Transfer to a baking sheet or platter; cover loosely with aluminum foil, and keep warm in oven while you cook. Continue with more oil and remaining batter. (You'll have 12 to 15 pancakes.) Serve warm, with desired toppings.

Storing and Reheating Pancakes and Batter

- **To store pancake batter:** If you have leftover pancake batter that you will use within one day, keep the batter in the mixing bowl or measuring cup you mixed it in, cover it with plastic wrap, and store it in the refrigerator. If you won't be using the batter within a day, cook the rest of the pancakes and store them to reheat another time.
- **To store leftover pancakes:** Leftover pancakes freeze well. Be sure to let them cool completely before refrigerating or freezing. We recommend storing leftover pancakes in the refrigerator if you will eat them within a few days. For longer storage, freeze them. Whether you are refrigerating or freezing, keep them in a zip-top [freezer bag](#), separating them with wax or parchment paper so they don't stick. Make sure all the air is removed from the freezer bag.

How to Reheat Leftover Pancakes

There are several ways to reheat leftover pancakes, but we recommend using the oven method if you have a number of pancakes to reheat. If you're reheating just a few, use your toaster. Avoid the microwave; pancakes tend to cool and dry out more quickly with this method.

- **Reheating in the oven:** Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Place pancakes on a rimmed sheet pan and warm through. This will take between 6 and 10 minutes if you are starting with frozen pancakes; leftover pancakes from the refrigerator need less time.
- **Reheating in the toaster:** Place one pancake in each slot of the toaster and set it to a medium toast level. If the pancakes aren't warmed sufficiently, toast them again at a lower setting.

Pancake Variations

Buttermilk

In step 1, add 1/2 teaspoon baking soda to dry mixture. In step 2, replace the milk with low-fat buttermilk.

Yogurt

In step 1, add 1/2 teaspoon baking soda to dry mixture. In step 2, replace the milk with 2/3 cup plain low-fat yogurt and 1/3 cup milk.

Wholegrain With Yogurt

In step 1, replace the all-purpose flour with 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour, 1/4 cup each cornmeal and wheat germ, and 1/2 teaspoon baking soda. In step 2, replace the milk with 2/3 cup plain low-fat yogurt and 1/3 cup milk.

What to Serve With These Easy Pancakes

Butter, maple syrup, confectioners' sugar, honey, jams, preserves, sweetened [whipped cream](#), chocolate syrup, and fresh fruit are all delicious toppings for homemade pancakes.

To round out the meal, add a side of homemade [breakfast sausage patties](#) or use your oven for the [crispiest-ever bacon](#). You can also add a few fried eggs ([this technique](#) will give you perfect results every time), a heavenly [scramble](#), and/or some zesty [sweet-potato home fries](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

- Can you make pancakes ahead of time?

Yes, you can make pancakes ahead of time. We don't recommend making them ahead of a more formal weekend brunch, since they taste best when hot off the griddle.

Prepping a batch for quick weekday breakfasts, however, is a good idea; reheat as many as you need each morning.

- Can I omit the sugar?

No, we don't recommend omitting the sugar. Most pancake recipes use only a small amount of sugar (our recipe has 2 tablespoons of sugar for four servings). Even this small amount plays an important role in the batter. You can omit sweeteners, but your pancakes will be rubbery in texture.

- Can I use water or dairy-free milk instead?

Yes, you can use water or dairy-free milk instead. Choose an unsweetened option; replace the exact amount of dairy milk called for with your favorite alternative milk. You can use water, but the resulting pancakes will be less rich and flavorful.

- Can I use another flour besides all purpose?

Yes, you can use another flour besides all purpose for this recipe—with some caveats. For a gluten-free version, use a 1-to-1 gluten-free flour mix but we do not recommend swapping in a gluten-free flour like almond or oat flour. Substituting whole-wheat flour for all-purpose flour in our Easy Basic Pancakes recipe will result in a thinner batter; pancakes will also spread more in the pan. We recommend swapping only half the all-purpose for whole wheat flour for a healthier but still tender and tasty pancake.

5 More Pancake Recipes to Try

- [Test Kitchen's Favorite Buttermilk Pancakes](#)
- [Cottage Cheese Pancakes](#)
- [Banana Pancakes](#)
- [Cheddar-and-Scallion Savory Pancakes](#)
- [Buckwheat Pancakes](#)

Originally appeared: Everyday Food, September 2006

Updated by
[Esther Reynolds](#)

Reviews (297)

Easy Basic Pancakes

My Rating

4.1 out of 5

3930 Ratings

[5 star](#)1543

[4 star](#)1392

[3 star](#)989

[2 star](#)1

[1 star](#)5

Most helpful positive review

09/12/2024

the easiest and most delicious recipe!! I've been loyal to it for 5 years now. however I always add a splash of vanilla extract to enhance the flavour.

297 Reviews

08/12/2025

A keeper!Easy to follow

Perfect brinner dinner!! So easy to follow and if you read the tips they are very helpful!🥞🥞

07/26/2025

Not sweet enough. Didn't taste of anything. Texture was good.

06/25/2025

Moist and fluffy!

05/23/2025

Tastes great but way too watery if you're looking to make larger pancakes. They're not fluffy, either

04/13/2025

Easy to follow

04/06/2025

A keeper! Easy to follow Family favorite Great flavors

I've been making these pancakes for over 5 years. They are super easy to make and give light, low sugar pancakes with the perfect thickness for us. My daughter loves them! If you are looking for super thick, sugary pancakes these are not it. I do change things up a bit and use whole wheat flour and olive oil. My pancakes are about 1/2 inch thick. I also add a splash of vanilla. These are fun because you can sprinkle cinnamon on top while they are cooking, oatmeal, or throw in some berries if you want additional flavor.

[Read More](#)

03/30/2025

Did not work

TOO watery! Pancakes were so flat and tasted metallic.

03/20/2025

Whatever assistant slapped together this recipe botched it hard core. First of all, the appropriate ratio is ONE tsp baking powder to ONE cup flour. Baking powder has a distinct metallic taste, adding the amount in the recipe wouldn't improve the lift but it would make it taste like a tin can. GROSS. Second of all, if you use buttermilk and baking soda, you should OMIT the baking powder. Because um... baking basics 101. Or, you could leave the baking soda out, use the 1 tsp baking powder and buttermilk. Either way it'll work fine for pancakes.

[Read More](#)

02/25/2025

A keeper! Easy to follow

Didn't have to buy one new thing to make this! A 'pantry' recipe indeed! Bonus for me: as I live alone I halved it, and ate half of that (so a quarter, I guess). I then just refrigerated the remaining batter in a small Tupperware-esque container, and didn't cook it until 2 days later. Glad to say the batter held up very well, and the pancake was even tastier!

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