

# My top 10 baking tips and tricks



## My top 10 baking tips to help you succeed in the kitchen!

Recently I came across a post [Mary Berry Baking Tips](#) and it got me thinking what would my baking secrets be that I could share with my readers. So this post **Baking Tips and Tricks** was born!

### 1. Understand the measurements correctly

The first thing you need to check is to see in what measurements your recipe is and then to convert it to the ones you use. For example I work in cups and kilograms.

Check out my page on [Baking Conversions](#) to help you with converting your measurements. Print it out, laminate it and have it close by every time you bake. For example:

- White Granulated Sugar: 1 cup = 7 ounces = 200 grams

I also strongly recommend that you use a [kitchen scale](#) because it helps to eliminate incorrect measurement! Get the weighing of your ingredients right from the start. Every step of the recipe is important because it all determines the outcome of the final product. For example using baking powder when baking a cake. If you add too much, your cake will rise very quickly but will then fall flat.

### 2. Plan ahead

I don't know the amount of times I've wanted to bake something just to realise I don't have my eggs or butter at room temperature and I needed to wait. Wait is not something I do well. The best is to plan ahead but on that odd occasion when you didn't, you could swap the butter in the recipe for oil. I use Sunflower but you could also use Canola Oil.

**My top tip** is to put hot water in a bowl and dip your eggs in there for a few seconds (not more). This brings up the temperature of your egg and helps not to split the batter. This is not something you should do every time you bake but rather on that odd occasion when you've forgotten to take your eggs out of the fridge. Trust me it works!

### 3. Be creative with your recipes

Don't get me wrong, I love recipe books, especially the pictures in them. However if the recipe requires some strange ingredient that you have no idea where you're going to find it (like what happens with me often because of the fact that I live on an island). Then use your imagination and think if you could replace it with something else or omit it totally.

Be brave and daring in the kitchen. Don't stick to Traditional. Let me explain: say you have an amazing recipe for cinnamon rolls (traditional) but you take it up a notch and add dried cranberries to it, or like what I did for our Christmas lunch last year by adding apple pie filling to it (so delicious - you guys have to try it!).

### 4. Have fun

Baking is therapeutic (to me it is). If you don't enjoy it, don't attempt it. It's not something to be rushed. Well that is not true if you have a Bakery but we're talking about the average person out there. I just love the smell of freshly baked bread and I get super excited when I get to try out new tasty cake recipes!

Put on your favorite songs, throw on your apron and let the fun begin!

### 5. Equipment for Baking

Make sure you have the right equipment on hand when baking. Just as you plan to have all the ingredients. Plan to have the right equipment. Check out the [Equipment I use for Baking](#) where I share with you the equipment that I use when I bake.

Remember you don't need everything at once, start by adding one by one. It took me well over two years to build up my baking equipment.

### 6. Cake Making Tips

I love baking cakes. My favorite part is decorating them so I thought it fitting to add my **cake baking tips and tricks** with you guys in this post.

- Make sure your cake is completely baked. You can test it in multiple ways and I suggest you do all. I have used the **toothpick method** (this is when you stick a toothpick into the middle of the cake and if there are no cake crumbs on it when you take it out of the cake, it should be done) to find the cake was not baked completely through after all.
- Check the **color of your cake**. If it is golden brown then it is a good indication that it is done. Lastly hold your hand on the top of the cake and push it down slightly, if it **pops up right back then it's done**.
- Also make sure your cakes are completely cooled before preparing them for decoration. **Top tip:** Once your cake has cooled, leave it in the fridge for an hour before using your saturated knife to level them.
- Another baking tip for cakes would be to [crumb coat your cake](#) before decorating it. This keeps the crumbs in place and allows you to frost your cake without any crumbs in the way.

### 7. Stock up on the basics

I would suggest that you always keep the following ingredients in stock:

- flour
- white and brown sugar
- baking powder
- baking soda
- yeast sachets
- salt
- cornstarch
- icing sugar
- pure cocoa powder
- oil
- milk
- vanilla extract
- long life cream
- butter without salt
- eggs

Most recipes for sponge cake will include some of these ingredients. With these basic ingredients in your pantry you are good to go! Check out my [frugal kitchen tips and tricks](#) post where I share with you how you can save money in the kitchen when baking!

### 8. Start off easy

One of the secrets to baking is to start off easy. Baking simple. What I mean with this is to use easy recipes for baking when you first start off. Don't use complicated recipes. Learn the basic baking tips and as you grow in confidence you can add to your skills. When I started my blog I wanted to learn everything "now". I soon realised that it was going to take time to cultivate my skills and that I needed to focus on one skill at a time.

Everytime I posted a [new blog post](#) I would make sure that I learnt a new basic baking (sometimes not so basic) skill. This is probably **my best baking tip for beginners!** Remember there are so many good recipes for baking out there, and you can only bake one at a time :-)

### 9. Healthy Substitutions

Sometimes we feel like something sweet or we have the urge to bake something but at the same time we are trying to be more healthy. There is no reason why you couldn't enjoy your sweet treat! These healthy ingredient options are great replacements and :

- apple sauce for oil/butter
- banana for eggs (or egg whites only)
- fat free or low fat yoghurt for milk/buttermilk
- stevia/honey for sugar

Also check out this great chart on [Healthy Baking Substitutions on Pinterest](#) with more healthy options.

## 10. Basic Baking Terms

Know your basic baking terms. Understand what the difference is between icing and frosting. Know the difference between Swiss meringue and Swiss meringue buttercream. Check out this post I wrote on [7 different frosting types](#). These are the important things to know when you're a Baker (amateur or professional).

This will eliminate the stress in the kitchen. With this knowledge you will not feel overwhelmed when you read a recipe and there are various parts to it. You'll know what it means when the recipe requires you to bake your [cheesecake](#) in a **water bath**.

Sally at [Sally's Baking Addiction](#) says that Cheesecakes are often baked in water baths. Which simply means that the cheesecake is baked in a round [springform pan](#) covered with aluminium foil on the bottom and sides, then the pan is placed into a larger pan with hot water inside. This method is used because the hot water steam will ensure even baking, thus lessening the likelihood of cracking on top.

I hope you guys find great use from my tips on baking! I would love it if you would share what your best baking tip is in the comment section below!

Johlene

**xoxo**