



BAKELY BAKEHOUSE

BAKING THAT ACTUALLY WORKS

The Beginner's Bake Book

A beginner's guide + 20 step-by-step recipes. Free.

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Welcome to Bakely

This little book has two parts: a beginner's guide to get you started, and twenty complete recipes to put it into practice. Everything's written the Bakely way — clear steps, exact amounts, and the method actually spelled out.

Brand new to baking? Start with the guide on the next page. It covers the handful of things that make baking work — and once you've got those, the recipes will turn out.

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The Beginner's Guide

Everything you need to know before your first bake — on two pages.

1. The five golden rules

- **Weigh, don't guess.** Use digital scales. Cups pack flour unevenly and throw a recipe off — weighing is the single biggest upgrade to your baking.
- **Read the whole recipe first.** Two minutes now tells you what to prep, preheat and have ready. It saves a flop later.
- **Preheat properly.** Give the oven a full 15 minutes. Putting batter into a not-quite-hot oven is a common cause of poor rise.
- **Use room-temperature ingredients** unless a recipe says otherwise. Cold butter and eggs don't combine smoothly.
- **Don't open the oven door early.** The rush of cold air makes cakes sink. Wait until at least three-quarters of the baking time has passed.

2. The kit you actually need

You don't need much to start. The essentials:

- Digital kitchen scales (the one must-have)
- A couple of mixing bowls
- Measuring spoons
- A baking tray and some baking paper
- A skewer or cocktail stick (for testing cakes)

Nice to have later: an electric whisk, a cooling rack, and a cheap oven thermometer.

3. Baking words, explained

- **Creaming** — beating butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy.
- **Folding** — gently combining with a spoon to keep the air in (don't beat).
- **Rubbing in** — working cold butter into flour with your fingertips until like breadcrumbs.
- **Proving** — leaving yeast dough somewhere warm to rise.
- **Blind baking** — baking a pastry case on its own before adding a wet filling.
- **Soft / stiff peaks** — how far you've whipped cream or egg whites; soft peaks flop over, stiff peaks stand up.

4. Is it done? How to tell

- **Cakes** — a skewer in the centre comes out clean, and the top springs back when lightly pressed.
- **Bread** — tap the bottom; it should sound hollow.
- **Cookies** — golden at the edges but still soft in the middle. They firm up as they cool, so don't overbake.
- **Cheesecake** — edges set but a slight wobble in the centre. It firms up as it cools.

5. When it goes wrong — quick fixes

- **Cake sank in the middle** — usually the oven door opened too early, or too much raising agent.
- **Cookies spread flat** — the dough was too warm. Chill it, and use a cool tray.
- **Dense, heavy sponge** — overmixed once the flour went in. Fold gently and stop as soon as it's combined.
- **Bread didn't rise** — the yeast was likely dead. Check it's in date and proof it in warm, not hot, water.

6. A word on your oven

Most home ovens run hotter or cooler than the dial says — a cheap oven thermometer takes out the guesswork. These recipes use fan-oven temperatures; if yours is conventional (no fan), set it about 20C higher.

That's it. Get those basics down and you're most of the way there. Now — let's bake.

The Recipes

Twenty complete bakes to put the guide into practice. Each one is written the same clear, step-by-step way.

COOKIES

Oaty chocolate chip cookies

Chewy oat cookies loaded with chocolate chips — hearty and not too sweet.

35m · Makes 18 cookies

Ingredients

150 g	Butter, softened
120 g	Soft brown sugar
80 g	Caster sugar
1	Egg
1 tsp	Vanilla
180 g	Plain flour
0.5 tsp	Bicarbonate of soda
0.5 tsp	Salt
120 g	Porridge oats
150 g	Chocolate chips

Method

1. Cream the butter and both sugars until light. Beat in the egg and vanilla.
2. Mix in the flour, bicarb and salt, then stir through the oats and chocolate chips.
3. Roll into balls and space well apart on the lined trays — they spread.
4. Bake at 175C fan for 11-13 minutes until golden at the edges but still soft in the middle.
5. Leave on the tray for 5 minutes to firm up, then move to a rack.

Tip: The cookies are soft and fragile straight from the oven — let them firm up on the tray for 5 minutes before moving.

COOKIES

Classic shortbread

Crisp, buttery shortbread with just three ingredients.

40m · Makes 16 fingers

Ingredients

200 g	Butter, cold and cubed
100 g	Caster sugar
300 g	Plain flour
1 pinch	Salt

Method

1. Rub or beat the butter, sugar, flour and salt together until it just comes together into a dough.
2. Press evenly into the lined tin and prick all over with a fork.
3. Bake at 150C fan for 30-35 minutes until pale gold — shortbread should not brown.
4. Mark into fingers while warm, dust with a little sugar, and cool fully in the tin before lifting out.

Tip: Cut while warm but cool fully before lifting — warm shortbread is fragile and the tin stays hot.

COOKIES

Ginger cookies

Thick, chewy ginger cookies with crisp edges and soft middles.

30m + chill · Makes 18 cookies

Ingredients

300 g	Plain flour
1 tsp	Bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp	Salt
170 g	Butter, melted
150 g	Light brown sugar
80 g	Caster sugar
1 + 1	Egg + 1 yolk
1 tsp	Vanilla
2 tsp	Ground ginger
60 g	Stem ginger

Method

1. Brown the melted butter in a pan over medium heat until it smells nutty and turns amber, then cool for 10 minutes — it's very hot.
2. Whisk in both sugars, then the egg, yolk and vanilla until glossy.
3. Fold in the flour, bicarb and salt, then ginger.
4. Chill the dough for at least 1 hour (or overnight) so the cookies hold their shape.
5. Scoop onto the lined trays, spacing well, and bake at 180C fan for 10-12 minutes until the edges are set but the centres still look soft.
6. Leave on the tray for 5 minutes to finish setting, then move to a rack.

Tip: Trays and any melted sugar are extremely hot; let the cookies firm up on the tray before lifting them.

Classic flapjacks

Chewy, buttery oat flapjacks — the easy traybake everyone gets right.

30m • Makes 16 squares

Ingredients

250 g	Porridge oats
150 g	Butter
120 g	Golden syrup
80 g	Soft brown sugar
1 pinch	Salt

Method

1. Gently melt the butter, golden syrup and brown sugar in a saucepan over low heat until smooth — don't let it boil.
2. Take off the heat and stir in the oats and a pinch of salt until evenly coated.
3. Press firmly into the lined tin — the firmer you press, the less it crumbles.
4. Bake at 160C fan for 20-25 minutes until golden at the edges but still soft in the middle.
5. Cool in the tin completely, then lift out and cut into squares — cutting while warm makes them fall apart.

Tip: Leave to cool fully in the tin before cutting — flapjack is very hot and soft when it first comes out.

Lemon blondies

Chewy, butterscotch lemon blondies.

40m · Makes 16 squares

Ingredients

175 g	Butter
250 g	Light brown sugar
2	Eggs
225 g	Plain flour
2 tsp	Vanilla
0.5 tsp	Salt
2	Lemon zest

Method

1. Brown the butter in a pan until nutty and amber, then stir in the sugar and leave to cool — it's very hot.
2. Beat in the eggs and vanilla until smooth.
3. Fold in the flour and salt, then lemon.
4. Spread into the lined tin and bake at 170C fan for 22-26 minutes until golden and just set.
5. Cool fully in the tin before slicing.

Tip: A slight wobble in the centre is right — they set as they cool, so resist overbaking.

SCONES

Oat scones

Hearty oat scones — lovely split and buttered, or with jam.

35m · Makes 8 scones

Ingredients

250 g	Self-raising flour
100 g	Porridge oats
60 g	Butter, cold and cubed
40 g	Caster sugar
1 tsp	Baking powder
180 ml	Milk
1	Egg, for glazing

Method

1. Rub the cold butter into the flour, oats, sugar and baking powder until like breadcrumbs.
2. Stir in the milk to a soft, slightly sticky dough — don't overwork it.
3. Pat out to about 3cm thick and cut straight down with the cutter (no twisting).
4. Brush the tops with beaten egg and bake at 200C fan for 12-15 minutes until risen and golden.
5. Cool on a rack — best eaten the same day.

Tip: Press the cutter straight down without twisting, or the scones rise lopsided. They're hot inside when first baked.

SCONES

Fruit scones

Tall, fluffy fruit scones ready in half an hour.

30m · Makes 8 scones

Ingredients

350 g	Self-raising flour
1 tsp	Baking powder
85 g	Cold butter
40 g	Caster sugar
175 ml	Milk
1	Egg (to glaze)
100 g	Sultanas

Method

1. Rub the cold butter into the flour, baking powder and sugar until it looks like fine breadcrumbs.
2. Stir in the sultanas, then add the milk and bring together quickly into a soft dough — don't overwork it.
3. Pat out to about 3 cm thick and cut rounds with a floured cutter, pushing straight down without twisting.
4. Brush the tops with beaten egg and bake at 220C fan for 12-15 minutes until well risen and golden.
5. Cool for a few minutes on a rack and serve warm.

Tip: Let scones cool for a couple of minutes before splitting — the insides hold a lot of heat.

MUFFINS

Banana & oat muffins

Moist banana muffins with oats — a great use for over-ripe bananas.

40m • Makes 12 muffins

Ingredients

3	Ripe bananas, mashed
250 g	Plain flour
100 g	Porridge oats
120 g	Soft brown sugar
2.5 tsp	Baking powder
0.5 tsp	Salt
2	Eggs
120 ml	Milk
90 ml	Vegetable oil

Method

1. Whisk the flour, oats, sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.
2. In a jug, beat the eggs, milk, oil and mashed banana. Pour into the dry mix and fold until just combined.
3. Divide between the cases and bake at 190C fan for 20-24 minutes until risen and springy.
4. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then lift onto a rack.

Tip: Leave the muffins in the tin for 5 minutes before moving — they're hot and fragile straight from the oven.

MUFFINS

Blueberry muffins

Soft, bakery-style blueberry muffins with a high domed top.

35m · Makes 12 muffins

Ingredients

300 g	Plain flour
150 g	Caster sugar
2.5 tsp	Baking powder
0.5 tsp	Salt
2	Eggs
240 ml	Milk
90 ml	Vegetable oil
1 tsp	Vanilla
150 g	Blueberries

Method

1. Whisk the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl.
2. In a jug, beat the eggs, milk, oil and vanilla. Pour into the dry mix and fold in the blueberries until only just combined — about 30 seconds; a few lumps are fine.
3. Divide between the cases and bake at 190C fan for 18-22 minutes, until risen and springy.
4. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then lift onto a wire rack.

Tip: Leave the muffins in the tin for 5 minutes before moving them — they're hot and fragile straight from the oven.

PUDDINGS

Molten chocolate puddings

Individual chocolate puddings with a soft, molten centre — a restaurant classic at home.

30m · Makes 4 puddings

Ingredients

100 g	Dark chocolate
100 g	Butter
2	Eggs
2	Egg yolks
80 g	Caster sugar
40 g	Plain flour
1 tbsp	Cocoa, for dusting

Method

1. Melt the chocolate and butter together gently until smooth, then leave to cool slightly.
2. Whisk the eggs, yolks and sugar until pale and thick, then fold in the melted chocolate and the flour.
3. Divide between the buttered ramekins and place on a tray.
4. Bake at 200C fan for 10-12 minutes — the tops should be set but the centres still soft.
5. Leave for 1 minute, then turn out onto plates and serve straight away while molten.

Tip: The puddings and ramekins are extremely hot — turn out carefully with a cloth and warn anyone eating that the centre is molten and can scald.

PUDDINGS

Sticky toffee pudding

Soft date sponge under a warm toffee sauce — proper comfort pudding.

55m · Makes 9 servings

Ingredients

200 g	Dates, chopped
250 ml	Boiling water
1 tsp	Bicarbonate of soda
75 g	Butter
150 g	Soft brown sugar
2	Eggs
200 g	Self-raising flour
200 g	Soft brown sugar (for sauce)
100 g	Butter (for sauce)
150 ml	Double cream

Method

1. Soak the dates in the boiling water with the bicarb for 10 minutes, then mash lightly.
2. Cream the butter and sugar, beat in the eggs, then fold in the flour and the date mixture.
3. Pour into the lined tin and bake at 160C fan for 30-35 minutes until risen and firm.
4. For the sauce, gently melt the sauce butter, sugar and cream together and simmer 2-3 minutes until glossy.
5. Pour some sauce over the warm sponge and serve the rest alongside.

Tip: The toffee sauce is boiling hot and sticks to skin — let it cool a little before serving and keep children clear while you pour.

CHEESECAKES

New York cheesecake

The classic tall, dense, baked vanilla cheesecake on a biscuit base.

6h · Makes 12 slices

Ingredients

250 g	Digestive biscuits
100 g	Butter, melted
900 g	Cream cheese
200 g	Caster sugar
3 tbsp	Plain flour
3	Eggs
150 ml	Soured cream
2 tsp	Vanilla

Method

1. Crush the biscuits, mix with the melted butter and press into the tin base. Chill.
2. Beat the cream cheese, sugar and flour until smooth, then beat in the eggs one at a time, the soured cream and vanilla.
3. Pour over the base. Sit the foil-wrapped tin in a roasting tin and pour boiling water halfway up the sides.
4. Bake at 150C fan for 55-65 minutes until set at the edges with a slight wobble in the centre.
5. Cool in the oven with the door ajar, then chill several hours or overnight before slicing.

Tip: The water bath is full of boiling water — fill it carefully and remove with care. Leave a slight wobble in the centre; it sets as it chills.

CHEESECAKES

Basque burnt cheesecake

The deliberately dark, crustless cheesecake — caramelised top, soft creamy centre.

1h 20m · Makes 10 slices

Ingredients

600 g	Cream cheese
200 g	Caster sugar
3	Eggs
250 ml	Double cream
1 tbsp	Plain flour
1 tsp	Vanilla

Method

1. Beat the cream cheese and sugar until smooth, then beat in the eggs one at a time.
2. Mix in the cream, flour and vanilla until silky, and pour into the lined tin.
3. Bake at 210C fan for 45-50 minutes until deeply browned on top but still with a big wobble in the middle.
4. Cool in the tin — it sets and sinks as it cools. Best at room temperature or lightly chilled.

Tip: Leave a pronounced wobble in the centre — it firms as it cools. The tin and top are very hot, so cool in the tin before moving.

Apple galette

A rustic free-form apple tart with cinnamon sugar and a crisp, buttery crust.

1h · Makes 8 slices

Ingredients

200 g	Plain flour
120 g	Butter, cold and cubed
1 tbsp	Caster sugar
3 tbsp	Cold water
3	Apples, peeled and thinly sliced
2 tbsp	Caster sugar (for filling)
1 tsp	Cinnamon
1 tbsp	Demerara sugar
1	Egg, beaten

Method

1. Rub the butter into the flour and sugar until crumbly, add the cold water and bring together. Chill 30 minutes.
2. Roll out to a rough circle on the lined tray.
3. Toss the apple slices with the caster sugar and cinnamon and arrange in the middle, leaving a wide border.
4. Fold the edges up over the fruit, brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with demerara.
5. Bake at 190C fan for 30-35 minutes until golden and the apples are tender. Cool before slicing.

Tip: The apple filling holds heat — let the galette cool before slicing to avoid burns.

Shortcrust fruit tart

A crisp shortcrust case filled with vanilla custard and topped with fresh fruit.

1h 30m · Makes 10 slices

Ingredients

200 g	Plain flour
100 g	Butter, cold
50 g	Icing sugar
1	Egg yolk
2 tbsp	Cold water
400 ml	Milk
3	Egg yolks (custard)
80 g	Caster sugar
30 g	Cornflour
1 tsp	Vanilla
300 g	Mixed fresh fruit

Method

1. Rub the butter into the flour and icing sugar, add the yolk and water and bring to a dough. Chill 30 minutes.
2. Line the tin, prick the base, chill, then blind bake at 180C fan for 15 minutes with beans, 5 more without. Cool.
3. For the custard, heat the milk; whisk the yolks, sugar, cornflour and vanilla, pour on the milk, return to the pan and cook until thick.
4. Cool the custard, spread into the case and top with fresh fruit. Chill before serving.

Tip: Blind-baking beans and the tin are very hot — remove with care, and cool the custard before filling. Keep refrigerated once assembled.

BREAD

Oat soda bread

A quick yeast-free soda bread with oats — mixed and baked in under an hour.

55m • Makes 1 loaf

Ingredients

350 g	Plain flour
100 g	Porridge oats
1 tsp	Bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp	Salt
300 ml	Buttermilk

Method

1. Mix the flour, oats, bicarb and salt in a bowl.
2. Stir in the buttermilk quickly to a soft, rough dough — don't knead.
3. Shape into a round on the tray and cut a deep cross in the top.
4. Bake at 200C fan for 30-35 minutes until risen and hollow-sounding underneath.
5. Cool on a rack before slicing.

Tip: Cool on a rack before slicing — the crumb is still setting and trapped steam can scald.

Cinnamon rolls

Soft enriched dough rolled with cinnamon sugar and finished with a cream cheese icing.

3h · Makes 12 rolls

Ingredients

500 g	Strong white flour
7 g	Instant yeast
60 g	Caster sugar
1 tsp	Salt
250 ml	Warm milk
1	Egg
60 g	Butter, softened
80 g	Soft brown sugar (filling)
2 tbsp	Cinnamon
60 g	Butter, softened (filling)
100 g	Cream cheese (icing)
80 g	Icing sugar (icing)

Method

1. Mix the flour, yeast, sugar and salt. Add the warm milk, egg and butter and bring to a dough; knead 8-10 minutes until smooth.
2. Cover and prove until doubled, about 1 hour.
3. Roll out to a large rectangle, spread with the filling butter and scatter with the brown sugar and cinnamon.
4. Roll up tightly, cut into 12 and place in the tin. Prove again for 30-45 minutes until puffy.
5. Bake at 180C fan for 22-25 minutes until golden. Cool a little, then spread with the beaten cream cheese and icing sugar.

Tip: Let the rolls cool a little before icing and eating — the cinnamon sugar filling gets very hot and can scald.

PASTRIES

Puff pastry palmiers

Crisp, caramelised little puff pastry hearts — just two ingredients.

30m · Makes 20 palmiers

Ingredients

1	Sheet ready-rolled puff pastry
100 g	Caster sugar

Method

1. Sprinkle the work surface and the pastry generously with sugar and press it in lightly.
2. Roll both long sides of the pastry inwards to meet in the middle.
3. Chill for 15 minutes, then slice into 1cm pieces and lay cut-side up on the tray, well spaced.
4. Bake at 200C fan for 12-15 minutes, turning halfway, until golden and caramelised. Cool on a rack.

Tip: The melted sugar gets extremely hot and sticky — let the palmiers cool on the tray before handling.

PASTRIES

Chocolate éclairs

Crisp choux pastry filled with cream and topped with chocolate.

1h 15m · Makes 12 éclairs

Ingredients

75 g	Butter
150 ml	Water
100 g	Plain flour
3	Eggs
300 ml	Double cream
2 tbsp	Icing sugar
100 g	Dark chocolate

Method

1. Bring the butter and water to the boil, tip in the flour and beat to a smooth ball. Cool slightly.
2. Beat in the eggs a little at a time to a smooth, pipeable paste.
3. Pipe lines onto the lined tray and bake at 200C fan for 25-30 minutes until crisp and golden. Don't open the door early.
4. Cool, then split and fill with the cream whipped with icing sugar.
5. Melt the chocolate and dip or spread over the tops; leave to set.

Tip: Don't open the oven door during baking, and let the shells cool fully before filling — they're fragile and steam-filled when hot.

LOAF CAKES

Banana loaf cake

A moist banana loaf cake finished with plain.

1h 15m · Makes 1 loaf

Ingredients

200 g	Soft butter
200 g	Caster sugar
3	Eggs
200 g	Self-raising flour
0.5 tsp	Baking powder
3	Ripe banana, mashed

Method

1. Cream the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy, 2-3 minutes.
2. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then fold in the flour, baking powder and the flavourings until smooth.
3. Spoon into the lined tin, level the top, and bake at 160C fan for 45-55 minutes until a skewer comes out clean.
4. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a rack.
5. Dust with a little icing sugar to serve.

Tip: Check it's baked through: a skewer in the centre should come out clean.

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