



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Gingerbread Cutout Cookies

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Tips and Time Savers

- Chill the dough like it owes you money. Warm dough = warped cookies. Stick it in the fridge (or freezer if you're in a hurry) for at least an hour after mixing and again after cutting shapes.
- Roll it evenly, or face the wrath of uneven baking. Aim for ¼ inch thick—too thin and your cookies crisp up like crackers, too thick and they puff into gingerbread puffballs.
- Flour your surface, not your soul. Too much flour dries the dough—just a light dusting will do.
- Use parchment paper, not your grandma's old greased pan. It'll help prevent sticking and makes transferring cookies drama-free.
- Don't overbake! They'll keep baking a bit on the hot pan after you pull them out. Look for set edges and soft centers.
- Decorate once they're fully cooled. Unless you want your royal icing to run like mascara during a Hallmark breakup scene.
- Store with wax paper between layers. Or you'll end up with a tragic gingerbread pileup.

Storage

Once they're baked and cooled (and properly admired), store your gingerbread cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to a week. Layer them with wax paper if you decorated with royal icing—unless you want a cookie mosh pit on your hands.

Need them to last longer? Freeze undecorated cookies for up to 2 months. Just thaw at room temp and decorate like nothing ever happened.

You can also freeze the dough—wrap it tight and it'll keep its holiday spirit just fine.

Sometimes I'll go ahead and cut out the dough, flash freeze on a cookie sheet, and place in a freezer container with parchment between the layers. The just remove them, put on cookie sheets, and bake from frozen.

Variations

- Lemon twist: Swap the orange zest for lemon and add a tiny splash of lemon extract to the dough. It brightens everything like a Southern aunt in a sequin sweater.
- Chocolate gingerbread: Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder for a deeper, moodier cookie—perfect for goth holiday vibes or cocoa lovers.
- Spicy batch: Amp up the black pepper and fresh ginger for cookies with a kick. These are not for the faint of palate.
- Maple glaze instead of royal icing: For a cozy, woodsy flavor and less decorating fuss. Drizzle, let it drip, walk away.
- Add chopped crystallized ginger: Chewy little surprise bites that scream “I know what I’m doing.”
- Gluten-free option: Use a good 1:1 gluten-free flour blend. Just chill the dough a bit longer—GF dough tends to be a diva.

FAQs

Why do my gingerbread cookies spread too much?

Usually? Warm dough, hot hands, or too much butter. Chill that dough like it just saw its ex at the grocery store—at least 30 minutes before rolling and again after cutting.

Can I freeze the dough ahead of time?

Absolutely. Wrap it up tight and toss it in the freezer for up to 2 months. Just let it thaw in the fridge overnight before rolling—this isn’t a sprint.

Can I use blackstrap molasses?

You can, but it’s bitter and intense—kind of like your high school drama teacher. Regular unsulphured molasses gives you that deep, sweet holiday flavor without the drama.

Do I have to use fresh ginger and orange zest?

Nope—but they do add a little sparkle and brightness. Skip them if you must, but don’t come crying to me when your cookies taste like the ghost of Christmas beige.

How long do these cookies stay fresh?

About a week in an airtight container—longer if you’re freezing. Just don’t store them with peppermint bark unless you want them all to taste like Altoids.

Can I make these gingerbread cookies gluten free?

Yes. Use a good 1:1 gluten-free flour blend. Just chill the dough a bit longer—GF dough tends to be a diva.

Nice to have

As an Amazon Associate, I earn commission from qualifying purchases.

If you’re serious about turning your holiday kitchen into a cookie battleground, this Christmas Cookie Cutter Set (8-piece grip collection with gingerbread men, snowflakes, trees, etc.) is your sidekick. Slice your dough into festive shapes faster than you can say “Santa, I’ve been good-ish,” and decorate like the holiday hero you are. Click the link, grab a set (and maybe one for your fiercest baking rival), and let the cut-out chaos begin.

👉 [Grab the set here](https://www.restlesschipotle.com/gingerbread-cutout-cookies/)