

Oatmeal Chocolate Chip or Raisin Cookies

(6-7 dozen; recipe can be halved)

2 ½ cups butter
1 ½ cups brown sugar
1 cup white, granulated sugar
2 large eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 cup flour unbleached all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons baking soda
6 cups Old-fashioned oats
24 oz chocolate chips (2 regular size pkg) or 2 cups raisins, if you prefer
1 ½ cups roughly chopped nuts, optional

Note: if you have a hand-held mixer, make only a HALF BATCH ONLY AT A TIME

1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
2. Cream butter and both sugars in mixing bowl for 2-3 minutes, using electric mixer, until light in color and texture. Scrape down sides of bowl.
3. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat for one minute and scrape bowl again. Put flour, salt and baking soda into bowl and mix together separately on top of wet ingredients. Beat for 1-2 minutes or until well-incorporated. Do not over-mix. Slowly add oats until just mixed.* Add chocolate and nuts by mixer if you can, by hand if you can't.
4. Form into 1 ½" balls using your hands or a small scoop and place 9 or 12 cookies on each ungreased sheet.** Flatten cookies using the palm of your hand to about 1/3 " deep. Bake 8-10 minutes or until just getting golden brown and crispy at edges. If baking more than one tray at a time, switch trays and turn them around half-way through the baking time. Watch them closely so they don't get very brown.
5. Remove trays from oven; let sit 2 minutes. Remove cookies to cooling racks using very thin stainless steel spatula. Let cool. Store tightly covered in Tupperware. Freeze if not using today or tomorrow.

*A hand mixer may not be able to accomplish the entire oatmeal addition you can cut the recipe in half and have much less trouble mixing in the oats.

**I use heavy-duty Williams-Sonoma baking sheets, which will probably last most of a lifetime