



*Cooking 101:  
Easy  
Scratch Recipes*

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# Apple Pie Pancakes

Delicious Apple Pie Pancakes....they're like restaurant pancakes only you get to stay home.

1 batch of your favorite pancake recipe, prepared  
2-3 tsps cinnamon (or apple pie spice), divided  
3 apples, peeled and cored  
1/2 cup water  
1 tsp cornstarch  
1/4 cup brown sugar

Slice apples into 1/2 inch to 1 inch pieces. Add apples, 1 tsp cinnamon, water, cornstarch, and brown sugar to a medium saucepan. Cook on med, stirring occasionally for 20-30 minutes until apples are as tender as you'd like them to be.

While apples cook, prepare your pancake mix per your recipe's instructions. Add in 1-2 tsps cinnamon to the batter. Pour onto hot griddle and cook on med-high heat for 3-5 minutes per side.

Serve pancakes with cinnamon apples over the top.



# BISCUITS FROM SCRATCH

2 cups AP flour, plus more for dusting the board  
1/4 tsp baking soda  
1 tbl baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
6 tbs butter, very cold and cut into small chunks  
3/4-1 cup buttermilk

See Notes for GF and DF options!

Preheat oven to 450F\*\*\* and prepare baking sheets with non-stick cooking spray.

Combine dry ingredients into a large bowl and stir just to mix up a bit. Cut in butter with two forks or a pastry cutter until butter pieces are about the size of peas. Slowly add in buttermilk until dough forms. Turn dough out onto counter that has been lightly dusted with flour. Roll to about 1/2 inch thick and cut with a 2in biscuit ring or a drinking glass. Gently transfer to prepared pan.

Cook for 10-12 minutes or until they are a light golden color and cooked all the way through.

## \*\*\*Notes\*\*\*

### **GF--**

use 1 1/2 cups sweet rice flour plus 1/2 cup potato starch (not potato flour)

### **DF/Vegan--**

use soy baking sticks instead of butter and use 2 tsps lemon juice plus DF milk of choice to equal 3/4-1 cup buttermilk

GF/DF biscuits should cook at 400F for 17-20 minutes.



# HOMEMADE BROWNIES

2/3 cup coconut oil (canola and vegetable oil work too)  
1 1/4 cups sugar  
1/4 cup water  
4 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips, divided (24 ounces)  
2 tsps vanilla  
4 eggs  
1 1/2 cups flour  
1/2 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
Gluten Free/Vegan  
3/4 cup rice flour  
1/3 cup potato starch  
3 tbs tapioca starch  
2/3 tsp xanthan gum  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 cup coconut oil  
1 cup cocoa powder  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1 cup applesauce (room temp)  
1 1/2 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Spray a 13 x 9-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a heavy saucepan, bring coconut oil, sugar and water to a boil, stirring constantly until the sugar is dissolved (about 2-3 minutes). Remove from the heat, stir in 2 cups of chocolate chips until melted; cool slightly then beat in vanilla.

In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs, gradually add in the chocolate mixture, beating with a wooden spoon until completely mixed. In a separate bowl, mix together flour, baking soda, and salt; add to the chocolate mixture and mix well to combine. Stir in the remaining chocolate chips. Spread into prepared baking pan. Bake for 35-40 minutes (don't overbake).

## Gluten Free/Vegan

Preheat oven to 350F. Line a 9x13 inch pan with parchment paper and spray with non-stick cooking spray. Combine flours, xanthan gum, and baking powder in a medium bowl. Mix well to combine. In large microwave safe bowl, melt coconut oil (if it's not already in a liquid state). Add in cocoa and sugar and mix well to combine. Stir in applesauce and vanilla.

Blend in dry ingredients until incorporated. Pour into prepared pan and spread to edges of pan. Bake 30-35 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool completely.

Using parchment paper pull the brownies out of the pan and place on a cutting board (I found doing this after brownies sit for one day to be easiest).





# PERFECT CHOCOLATE CAKE FROM SCRATCH

2 cups sugar  
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup cocoa powder  
1 1/2 tsps baking powder  
1 1/2 tsps baking soda  
1 tsp salt  
2 eggs  
1 cup milk  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
2 tsps vanilla extract  
1 cup hot coffee

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour two 8-inch round baking pans.

Combine sugar, flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt in large bowl. Add eggs, milk, oil and vanilla. Beat on medium speed (using a stand or handheld mixer) 2 minutes. Stir in hot coffee (the batter will be thin). Pour the batter into prepared pans.

Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; remove cake from pans onto wire racks. Cool completely. Frost with your favorite frosting. Serves 10-12

Options: 9×13 pan and bake 35-40 minutes or 24 cupcakes (line muffin tin with paper baking cup, fill 2/3 full) and bake 22 to 25 minutes.

Gluten Free/Vegan Options:

Substitute flour for my GF blend (or one the subs cup for cup) plus 1 1/4 tsp xanthan gum, use egg replacer, and milk of choice.



# HOMEMADE SUGAR COOKIES

1/2 cup butter (or vegan baking sticks, I like Earth Balance), softened  
1 cup sugar  
1 egg (or egg replacer equivalent)  
1/2 cup oil  
3 cups white flour (or gluten free flour that subs cup for cup, such as mine or King Arthur)  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp cream of tartar  
1 tsp pure vanilla  
extra sugar for dipping

Preheat oven to 350F.

Mix all ingredients together in a mixer on medium speed until well combined. Scoop into 1 inch balls.

Roll balls in extra sugar and place on a greased baking sheet. Bake 10-15 minutes or until edges start to turn a golden brown.

Notes: Make a large batch and freeze individual cookie balls for a quick cookie treat.

Gluten Free/Vegan: I make these with the complete substitutions for gf, vegan and they work great. Substitute what you need and this cookie should work perfectly!



# HOMEMADE PIE DOUGH

2 1/2 cups AP flour  
2 tbs sugar  
1/2 tsp salt  
16 tbs cold, unsalted butter, cut into small pieces  
6 tbs very cold water

Combine flour, sugar, and salt in the bowl of a processor. Process briefly to blend dry ingredients. Pulse about 8-10 times in one second pulses to work the butter into the flour. Stop when the butter is the size of peas. Pour the water onto the mixture and do short pulses to incorporate water. The dough should be just wet enough that it will stick together when you pinch it. (Add additional water by the tablespoon as needed).

Divide the dough in half and shape each half into a ball, wrap each in plastic wrap, and chill in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Remove from the refrigerator. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured work surface.

Use as directed in your desired pie recipe (see notes and how to pre-bake the dough below).

## ***Gluten Free/Vegan Dough***

9 oz gluten free flour blend  
1 tsp xanthan gum  
1 tsp guar gum  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
4 ounces vegan buttery sticks (like Earth Balance)  
2 ounces butter-flavored shortening  
1/3 cup cold water

Cube the buttery sticks and shortening into 1-inch pieces. Place in freezer for about 15 minutes to chill.

Put the flour into a large food processor bowl. Pulse the the flours to blend them. Add the xanthan gum, guar gum, and salt. Pulse to combine. Reserve about 1/8 cup flour for dusting area when rolling out dough.

Add frozen “butter” to the flour. Pulse about 8-10 times in one second pulses to work the butter into the flour. Stop when the “butter” is the size of peas. Pour the water onto the mixture and do short pulses to incorporate water. The dough should be just wet enough that it will stick together when you pinch it. (Add additional water by the tablespoon as needed).

Bring the dough together into a ball, wrap in plastic wrap. Flatten it, gently, into a disc. Chill in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.

When ready to work with dough, lay down one piece of parchment paper with reserved flour, then put the dough on top of the parchment. Cover the disc with second piece of parchment (large enough to roll out the dough to cover your pie dish by a couple inches). Gently, roll out the dough, from the center out.

When the dough is in a large circle, remove top layer of plastic wrap. Gently move the dough into a 9-inch pie pan. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

## **Pre-Bake Dough:**

If you need a pre-baked crust, place a piece of aluminum foil onto the bottom of the pie dough. Fill the foil with dried beans. Bake the pie dough at 400F for about 20 minutes. Remove the beans and aluminum foil, then return the pie dough to the oven for an additional 8 minutes. Crust is now ready to fill and bake in your favorite pie recipes.



# Gravies

## *Red Eye Gravy*

Country ham  
4 tbs hot black coffee

Take a slice of uncooked ham with a lot of the fat left on. Fry the ham, in a large skillet, in its own fat until nicely browned on both sides. When it is cooked, transfer the ham to a platter. Add boiling black coffee to the skillet, scraping to dissolve the particles that cling to the bottom and sides.

Pour over the ham and serve.

Note: This gravy can be made from the drippings of pan-fried country ham, bacon, or other pork.

## *Cream Gravy*

4 tbs butter (or bacon drippings)  
4 tbs flour  
2 cups milk  
salt & pepper

1/2-3/4 cup cooked crumbled sausage (if making sausage gravy)

In a large skillet, melt butter and flour together over medium high heat. Cook flour mixture for 1-2 minutes, stirring often.

Lower heat to low and slowly pour in milk while constantly stirring. Keep stirring and work out any lumps that may have formed. Once lumps are gone, turn heat up to medium high and bring to a slow boil. Gravy will begin to thicken (add sausage if making sausage gravy) and keep stirring for 30 seconds-1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.

Gravy will continue to thicken as it cools.

## *Brown Gravy*

2 cups beef or chicken stock (or meat drippings with fat removed)  
2 tbs cornstarch  
2 tbs water  
1/2-3/4 cup cooked chopped giblets (for giblet gravy)

Add stock to large skillet over medium high heat. Bring to a boil. While stock is coming up to a boil, combine corn starch and water in a small bowl. Mix well to combine and work out any lumps.

Gently pour corn starch mixture into boiling stock. Stir constantly until gravy starts to thicken. (Add giblets for giblet gravy.) Season with salt and pepper.

Gravy will continue to thicken as it cools.

## *Gluten Free/Dairy Free Gravy*

4 tbs dairy free butter (or bacon drippings if you're not vegan)  
4 tbs sweet rice flour (other flours will be to gritty)  
2 cups plain rice or soy milk  
salt & pepper

In a large skillet, melt "butter" and rice flour together over medium high heat. Cook flour mixture for 1-2 minutes, stirring often. Lower heat to low and slowly pour in milk while constantly stirring. Keep stirring and work out any lumps that may have formed. Once lumps are gone, turn heat up to medium high and bring to a slow boil. Gravy will begin to thicken (add sausage or soy-based sausage to keep it vegan) if making sausage gravy) and keep stirring for 30 seconds-1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.

Gravy will continue to thicken as it cools.





# HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

1 egg yolk  
½ lemon, juiced  
1/ tsp cayenne pepper  
4 tbs (½ stick) butter, melted and hot  
Salt to taste

Melt butter in a microwave safe dish for 45-60 seconds (work fast, you want the butter hot when adding to the egg mixture).

In a blender, pulse egg yolk, lemon juice, and cayenne. Then drizzle in hot butter while blending until sauce is formed. Season with salt to taste.

Add to eggs and toast for a yummy breakfast!



# HOMEMADE HAMBURGERS

One of my favorite reasons for making my own burgers is because I can season the meat the whole way through and not just the outer surface.

When the whole patty is properly seasoned you will wonder how you ever ate a pre-made patty. The bad thing about this is that no other burger will do. I can't eat a restaurant burger because most of the time they just aren't seasoned properly.

Using a burger press will help you get a perfect shape. Hubbyman likes them perfectly shaped, but I don't really care...it all tastes the same. But I use the press to make him happy!

I'm not going to share an actual recipe for this. It's more of a guide. We pretty much always do this, it's a good foundation for all other burgers I make.

Once you have the ground beef in a bowl and have added your ingredients, score the meat with your hand to use as a guide when pulling out meat for each patty.

For about 1 1/4 lbs ground beef, use 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce, 2 tsps steak seasoning, and 2 tsps garlic (I love using Gourmet Gardens...it makes this even easier)



# HOW TO ROAST CHICKEN

3-4 lb Whole Chicken  
~ 3 tbs canola oil  
2 tbs herbs: Sage, Thyme, and Rosemary  
1 tbl salt  
1 tsp pepper  
For the inside: (Onion, Lemon, & Garlic)  
Preheat oven t 450F.

Chop herbs (or use equal amount of Gourmet Gardens) and combine with salt and pepper in a small bowl.

Remove neck and organs from the inside of the chicken. Rinse and pat dry. Thoroughly drying the bird helps the skin crisp up. Drizzle chicken with oil and then rub herb/salt mixture all over the bird (inside and out).

Stuff the bird with large chunks of lemon, onion, and lightly smashed garlic cloves. Make sure to stuff both sides.

Place in a shallow baking dish or roasting pan, breast side up.

Put chicken in oven and lower heat to 400F. Cook for 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. The best place to check for doneness (165F) is to insert a thermometer into the thickest, densest part of the chicken. Place it just between the breast, the leg, and the thigh, be careful not to let the thermometer touch a bone. Juices should also run clear.

When the chicken is done, remove from oven and allow to rest for 10-20 minutes to allow the juices to redistribute.

Notes: This is naturally gluten free. To keep it dairy free, opt for fresh herbs instead of Gourmet Garden herbs.



# HOMEMADE PIZZA DOUGH

2 pkg. yeast (I use 2 Tbls. of bulk yeast)  
2 cups tepid water (90°F)  
2 tbs sugar  
1/2 cup oil  
1 tsp salt  
5 1/2 - 6 cups flour  
4 cloves crushed garlic

Dissolve yeast in water and add sugar. Wait a few minutes. Add oil, salt, and garlic. In an electric mixer, mix in 3 cups flour and mix for about 10 minutes on med-low speed until the dough leaves the side of the mixer bowl. Add remaining flour w/ dough hook or by hand. Knead until smooth. Allow dough to rise in the bowl until doubled in size (for about one hour). Punch down.

Divide dough in half and roll each half out on a floured surface or parchment paper. Transfer each crust to a cookie sheet and let rise for about 20 minutes. Add desired toppings. Bake at 425° F for 20 min. Crust smells slightly like garlic bread, but as not strong.

This makes 2 cookie sheet sized.





# THE BEST HOMEMADE MASHED POTATOES

2 1/2 lbs potatoes, cut into 8 chunks/potato (skins removed if desired)  
4 tbs butter (I use Earth Balance)  
1/2-1 cup milk of choice (unflavored rice or soy milk or whole milk)  
1 tbs garlic powder  
salt & pepper, to taste

Add cut potatoes to a large stock pot filled with water (at least several inches above the potatoes). Bring to a boil over high heat and cook until fork tender (about 20 minutes). Test for doneness by inserting a fork into one of the larger pieces of potato (there should be no resistance).

When potatoes are fork tender, drain potatoes in a colander then return to the hot pot. Add butter and 1/2 cup of milk, garlic, salt, and pepper. Begin mashing with a potato masher. Mash to desired lumpiness.

If a super creamy mashed potato is desired use a hand held mixer to finish the potatoes. Add more milk as needed to reach desired consistency. Taste for seasoning and adjust salt, pepper, and garlic.

Do not overbeat the potatoes or they become gummy.

My dairy free version: use Earth Balance butter and unflavored soy milk)



Marinara  
Sauce

# MARINARA SAUCE

2 tbs olive oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 tsps Gourmet Gardens Garlic\*  
1 can (28oz) crushed tomatoes  
1 tbs Gourmet Gardens Oregano\*  
1 tbs Gourmet Gardens Basil\*  
1 whole bay leaves  
½ tsp sugar  
Salt and pepper, to taste

Over medium heat, heat oil in a large pot until hot. Add onion and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes until the onions begin to appear translucent. Add the garlic and stir for about 30 seconds, then add the tomatoes; stir to mingle the flavors.

Add in the herbs and bay leaves. Sprinkle in sugar, salt and pepper. Lower the heat and continue to simmer for 30 minutes, uncovered. Stir occasionally.

\*Note: If you are vegan or dairy free, omit Gourmet Gardens and opt for the same amount of fresh chopped herbs.



# HOMEMADE PASTA

1 1/2 cups flour (white or gluten free flour such as mine or King Arthur brand )  
1 egg (or 1 tbl egg replacer plus 1 1/2 tsps water)  
1/2 tsp salt  
6 tbls water

On a clean surface, measure dry ingredients into a large mound and then make a well. Pour the egg and some of the water into the well and start to incorporate some of the flour into the liquid, being careful not to break “the well wall”. (This is going to get messy...just go with it.) Gradually add more water as needed to moisten all the flour. This dough should not be sticky or soft and it will feel like you don’t have enough water.

Use your hands to knead the dough and it start to stick together, but it will still feel dry compared to other doughs. Let the dough rest by wrapping in plastic wrap and sitting it on the counter for about 20-30 minutes.

Divide the dough in eight sections. Roll out one section at a time (into a square or recangle shape) with a rolling pin. It should thin enough to feed into the pasta machine on its largest setting. There will be lots of cracks and uneven edges. Feed dough through machine on largest setting (see note below).

Take the first rollout and fold over in thirds. Turn 90 degrees and feed into the roller again. Do this several times, adjust the thickness level one level thinner and repeat until you reach the desired thickness.

Toss noodles with a little extra flour and place in small batches on a baking sheet to dry.

To cook the noodles immediately, bring a large pot of water to a boil, salt the water, and cook the pasta 4-5 minutes

To dry: lay the pasta over a clothes drying rack, coat hangers, or a broom handle propped up on two chairs and let air dry until completely brittle. Store in an airtight container for several weeks.

To freeze: freeze flat in the basket-shape on a baking sheet until completely frozen. Once frozen, gather baskets and place in an airtight container and freeze for up to three months. Dried and frozen noodles may need an extra couple minutes to cook.

Note:

If you make start to roll out your through the machine and it just crumbles and falls apart then put it back into the pile of dough and add water by the teaspoon full. Work it in and try again. If you make it enough you will get a feel for what it should feel like when you knead it.



# DARK CHOCOLATE ORANGE PUDDING (VEGAN)

1/4 cup cornstarch  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/8 tsp salt  
3 cups vanilla soy milk  
6 ounces 72% chocolate, coarsely chopped  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
4-6 drops pure orange essential oil\*

1 tsp instant coffee (\*opt\*add if not using premium chocolate)

Combine the coffee (if using), cornstarch, sugar, and salt in a medium-sized sauce pan over medium low heat. Slowly whisk in the milk, scraping the bottom and sides of the pan to fully incorporate the dry ingredients. Stir occasionally, scraping the bottom and sides. Use a whisk to work out any lumps if they begin to form.

After 15 to 20 minutes, when the mixture begins to thicken and coats the back of the spoon, add the chocolate. Continue stirring for 2 to 4 minutes, or until the pudding is smooth and thick. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla and orange.

If your pudding is a bit lumpy, then strain through a fine-mesh strainer into a serving bowl or into a large measuring cup with a spout (and then pour into individual serving dishes).

Cover with plastic wrap. To prevent pudding skin, place plastic wrap on top of the pudding and smooth it gently on the the surface before refrigerating. Refrigerate for at least one hour.

Note: This pudding is best if made a day in advance. It will keep several days in the fridge if you can keep yourself from eating all of it!

\*Not a fan of orange and chocolate....just leave the orange oil out!





# AMAZING WHITE CAKES

2 3/4 cups AP flour  
1 1/2 cups, plus 2 tbs sugar  
1 tbl baking powder  
12 tbl butter, softened  
4 large egg whites + 1 large egg  
3/4 cup sour cream  
1/4 cup water  
2 tsps real vanilla extract  
1 tsp almond extract

Preheat oven to 350F.

Mix all the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl fitted to an electric mixer. Add softened butter and combine on low speed.

Add egg whites, one at a time, then beat mix in whole egg.  
Gently stir in sour cream, water, and extracts, beating to keep the mixture fluffy.

Grease and flour pans of choice: 2-8 or 9 round or square cake pans, 1-9x13 pan, or 24 cupcake tins (using papers).

Bake at 350F. Bake for 18 minutes, then check every few minutes (5 minute intervals at the most) for cupcakes or layer cakes, 30 minutes for 9x13

### ***Gluten Free/Vegan Option:***

Use my [GF flour blend <http://www.aroundmyfamilytable.com/2013/03/the-best-gluten-free-flour-blend/>] (or one that subs cup for cup) plus 1 1/4 tsp xanthan gum, use dairy free/vegan options for the butter and sour cream, sub 3 servings egg replacer for the eggs.



# Meet the Chef

**W**endy O’Neal is the creator of the popular food and homemaking blog Around My Family Table and cookbook author. Her passion for sharing recipes and tips to help families gather around the supper table inspired her to begin the site in 2009. Wendy’s award-winning recipes have been featured on numerous online sites, including the Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, FoxNews.com, MSN.com, Today.com, eHow, Epicurious, and many more. Wendy has also competed at the World Food Championships in the Food Blogger Division.

Wendy’s mom taught her to cook at an early age, but it wasn’t until college and marriage to her high school sweetheart that she really found her love of cooking and developed her culinary skills. She taught herself how to grill and smoke shortly after she married, and since then she and her husband have had something going in the smoker almost every weekend.

Wendy, her husband, and their two children live in Phoenix, Arizona. You can find Wendy at [AroundMyFamilyTable.com](http://AroundMyFamilyTable.com), sharing her latest recipes, cooking tips, and homemaking ideas to help your family come together at the supper table.

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