

HOW TO BAKE WITH LESS SUGAR

You want to cut back on sugar, but how do you do it during the holiday baking season? **Experts say sugar can be safely reduced by about a third without affecting quality.** In tests, chocolate chip cookies could lose 75% of the original recipe's sugar and still be tasty. Brownies, oatmeal cookies and sugar cookies could lose 50%. Gingersnaps could only lose 25%. Here are some tips:

- 1 Sugar on the tongue is what matters most, so use sugar as a topping to get the most perceived sweetness for the least amount of sugar. Sprinkle atop muffins and scones before baking. Roll cookies in sugar before baking while cutting back in the recipe..
- 2 Sugar helps baked goods retain water, so the more sugar, the moister your muffin. The more you reduce sugar, the more you'll have to adjust. Increase bananas or zucchini to your quick breads. Or add a bit of milk to your cake.
- 3 Reduced sugar means reduced caramelization, which is a flavor enhancer. Chilling cookie dough for at least 30 minutes before baking increases caramelization during baking.
- 4 Sugar contributes to overall flavor, not just sweetness. So add extra spices, fruits, nuts, or extracts to compensate. The sugar from fruit comes with a bonus: antioxidants and fiber.
- 5 In cookies, the less sugar you use, the less they will spread, and that makes a cakey, not crispy, cookie. If you want a crispy cookie, try making them extra thin.
- 6 It's tricky to reducing sugar in chocolate baked goods, such as brownies, chocolate cake, which can become bitter without the sugar to balance.



Sources: Food 52 <https://food52.com/blog/15911-what-experts-know-about-reducing-sugar-in-baking-recipes>,
King Arthur Flour <https://blog.kingarthurfLOUR.com/2017/07/11/baking-with-reduced-sugar/>