

I HATE Cooking Recipes



Potential Cake Faults

“Baking is a much less forgiving process than cooking. Your chicken dinner creation can be totally improvised, but your cake dessert cannot. While cake formulas and mixing methods should be uniform, they’re often not. This table is designed to help you diagnose your cake disappointments for adjustment and improvement next time.” -Chef Todd Mohr

FAULT

REMEDY

Poor Volume

If your cake DIDN'T RISE, it could be because:

There's too little flour compared to liquid
 There's too much liquid compared to flour
 You have a weak leavening agent
 Your leavener was not activated
 In Angel Food, fat deflated egg white foam
 You waited too long to put the pans in the oven
 You banged the pan, knocking air out
 You opened the oven door too often
 Your oven was too hot

Add flour or reduce liquid
 Add liquid or reduce flour
 Increase leavener
 Increase acid to baking soda
 Start over with clean utensils
 Prepare pans ahead of time
 Be more careful
 Be more patient
 Get an oven thermometer

Uneven Shape

If your cake had an UNEVEN SHAPE, perhaps:

You mixed it improperly, leaving flour pockets
 You spread the batter in the pan unevenly
 Your oven racks aren't level
 You placed the cake too close to a oven fan
 You overcrowded the oven
 Your oven heats unevenly
 Your pans are warped

Scrape mixer bowl often
 Pay more attention
 Level your pans
 Give plenty of room between cakes
 Give plenty of room for air flow
 Learn your hot spots
 Time for new pans

Dark Crust

If the crust on your cake is TOO DARK:

There's too much sugar in your formula
 There's too much egg yolk in a chiffon cake
 Your oven was too hot
 You baked it for too long

Decrease sugar or increase all others
 Increase other liquids
 Get an oven thermometer
 Get a timer and remind yourself

Light Crust

If the crust on your cake is TOO LIGHT:

There's too little sugar in your formula
 There's not enough egg yolk in a chiffon cake
 Your oven was not hot enough
 You didn't bake it long enough

Increase sugar or decrease all others
 Increase egg yolk
 Get an oven thermometer
 Relax, don't be so impatient for cake

Burst or Cracked

If the crust on your cake has BURST OR CRACKED:

There's too much flour in the formula
 The flour you used has too much protein
 There's not enough liquid in the formula
 You mixed it improperly, leaving flour pockets
 Your oven was too hot, drying the cake

Decrease flour, increase liquids
 Use cake flour, not bread flour
 Increase liquids, decrease flour
 Scrape mixer bowl throughout mixing
 Get an oven thermometer

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Cake
Troubleshooting

FAULT

REMEDY

Soggy Crust

If the crust on your cake is SOGGY
 You didn't bake it long enough
 You didn't test the middle with a toothpick
 The cakes steamed in the pans while cooling
 You wrapped it in plastic before it was cool

Relax, you'll have better cake if you wait
 Test cakes three ways to tell doneness
 Cool cakes on racks with ventilation
 Chill out.

Dense or Heavy

If your cake's crust is very DENSE OR HEAVY:
 Your formula lacks enough leavening agent
 Your formula has too much flour
 Your formula has too much fat
 Your formula has the wrong type of fat
 During mixing, your fat was too cold
 Your oven wasn't hot enough

Increase leavening agent
 Increase liquid in the formula
 Decrease the amount of fat
 Use emulsified shortening for high liquid
 Use room temperature fat
 Get an oven thermometer

Coarse

If your cake's crust is COARSE OR GRAINY:
 Your formula has too much leavening agent
 Your formula has too little egg protein
 Your cake was mixed incorrectly
 Your formula has the wrong type of flour

Reduce or use baking soda over powder
 Increase egg yolks
 Egg yolks must be emulsified with fat
 Use cake flour over bread flour

Tough/Chewy

If your cake's crust is very TOUGH OR CHEWY:
 Your flour has too much protein, is too strong
 Your formula has too much flour
 Your formula has too little sugar
 Your formula has too little fat or shortening
 You over mixed the batter, developing gluten

Use cake flour over bread flour
 Reduce the amount of flour
 Increase sugar
 Increase fat
 Mix flour only until incorporated

Cake Baking Temperatures

High-Fat Cakes (Creaming/2-Stage/Sponge method)

Pan	F	C	Min
6" (15cm) Round Cake	375	190	20
8" (20cm) Round Cake	375	190	25
10" (25cm) Round Cake	360	180	35
12" (30cm) Round Cake	360	180	35
18"x26" (46cmx66cm)	360	180	35
18"x13' (46cmX33cm)	360	180	30
9"X9" (23cmx23cm)	360	180	30
Cupcakes (1.5 oz)	385	195	20
Pound Cake Loaf	350	175	60

Low-Fat Cakes (Angel Food/Chiffon methods)

Pan	F	C	Min
6" (15cm) Round Cake	375	190	20
8" (20cm) Round Cake	375	190	20
10" (25cm) Round Cake	360	180	30
12" (30cm) Round Cake	360	180	30
18"x26" (46cmx66cm)	375	190	20
18"x13' (46cmX33cm)	375	190	20
9"X9" (23cmx23cm)	375	190	15
Cupcakes (1.0 oz)	375	190	20
8" Angel Food Tube	360	180	30
10" Angel Food Tube	350	175	50