

Recipes and reasons

# Common errors plague bakers

Maybe it's fun to have candles burning atop the icing on cakes. But they shouldn't be there as a distraction from the mistakes beaten or cooked into your cake batter.

Although the prospect of baking a cake frightens fewer cooks than the thought of whipping up baked Alaska, those iced layers are not mistake proof.

Tunneling in the batter, sugary crusts, peaking in the center and coarse texture can detract from the appearance and taste of both butter and sponge cakes.

A common mistake when cake baking is not allowing ingredients, such as milk and eggs, to reach room temperature before mixing them into the batter.

More obvious is checking to be sure that your pans are the proper size and that your ingredients are marked with the U.S. standard stamp for accurate measuring.

Over beating, underbeating, overcooking and undercooking are other common errors which face cake bakers in the kitchen.

Check your mistakes against some of the following causes to remedy or improve your cakes at birthday time, anniversary time or anytime.

**BUTTER CAKES**

Overbaking can cause a multiplicity of errors. Too much mixing

of butter cake batter can produce peaking in the center of a layer, a tough crust, a heavy cake or tunnelled batter which is uneven and lined.

A coarse texture may result if the fats and sugars are underbeaten when they are combined. Underbeating can also produce a sugary crust in which the sugar grains are visible because it is improperly mixed.

Ideally, butter cakes should be uniform in shape and flat or slightly rounded on top. Uniformity of color is also sought, with a golden brown crust wrapping the top and sides of the layers.

Aim for thin and tender crust and a fine, even appearing texture.

**SPONGE CAKES**

Sponge cakes are more sensitive than their butter counterparts. One particular area of difficulty in mastering a sponge cake may be the crust.

If you are turning out a thick, hard crusted cake, you may be overbaking the batter or baking in an overheated oven. But, if your crust is sticky and clings to your fingers at every touch, you may be allowing insufficient baking time or using too much sugar in the batter.

If your crust is cracked when you remove it from the oven, an overheated oven or overbeaten eggs could be the culprit.

Getting below the crust to the batter can also be a slice into some errors.

A coarse texture may result from too little mixing or too much oven heat. Dryness may be brought on by overbaking or a batter with too much flour or too little sugar.

If your cake refuses to rise to its full heights, it may be due to insufficient baking or an overdose of mixing.

When baking a sponge cake, try to turn out a golden brown crust with a finely textured, moist batter beneath it. This is a cake lightweight for its size.

**OATMEAL CAKE**

1 1/2 cup boiling water  
1 cup oatmeal  
1/2 cup butter  
1 cup white sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
2 eggs  
2 eggs

1 1/2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Pour boiling water over oatmeal, cover and let stand 20 minutes. Beat butter, gradually add sugar and blend in vanilla and eggs. Add oatmeal mixture. Add sifted dry ingredients.

Four in a floured, greased 8-inch square pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 to 55 minutes.

**ICING**

1/4 cup butter melted  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
3 tablespoons half and half  
1/3 cup chopped nuts  
1/3 cup coconut

Combine all ingredients and spread on top of cake.

Place under the broiler until bubbly.

**BITTERSWEET SUNSHINE CAKE**

5 eggs separated  
3 teaspoons cold water  
1 1/2 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup boiling water  
1 1/4 cup sifted flour  
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

Beat egg yolks and cold water until light. Add sugar, vanilla, salt and boiling water. Gradually mix in flour.

Partially beat egg whites. Add cream of tartar and beat until stiff. Fold into sugar mixture.

Pour into a tube pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour.

Frost with peppermint flavored powdered sugar frosting. Drizzle with melted bitter chocolate if desired.

Yield 12-16 servings.

## Know warning signs of a heart attack

Every year, more than half a million Americans die of the nation's number one killer—heart disease.

Many of these deaths are needless because the victims do not recognize the early warning signs of a heart attack and seek help in time.

Minutes count when a heart attack occurs; unnecessary delay can be fatal.

What are the symptoms of a heart attack?

**WATCH FOR the following danger signs:**

Temporary or prolonged heavy pressure or squeezing pain in the center of the chest.

Chest pains that spread to the shoulder, arm, neck or jaw.

Sweating, nausea, vomiting or shortness of breath accompanying such chest pains.

Half of the people who die from heart attacks apparently do not recognize these symptoms in time.

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**Director appointed for family service**

Robert Bergstrand will become the assistant director of the Family and Children Services of Oakland County.

He will replace Robert Daniels who will work on his doctoral degree at the Columbia University School of Social Work after Aug. 23.

Daniels has been the assistant director since the merger of the agency in 1972.

Prior to that, he held a supervisory position with Catholic Social Service of Wayne County for six years.

Announcement of Bergstrand's appointment was made by Robert Janes, executive director.

Bergstrand is currently the Field Consultant for the Child Welfare League of America.

He has worked for family services in Toledo and Milwaukee.

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