

Recipes are chemical formulas

They specify the ingredients, proportions, and methods necessary to produce a satisfactory product. Companies and publishers spend considerable time and money testing recipes for consumer use. Any change made in the recipe will produce a slightly different product from the one that was tested and published. You may or may not be satisfied with the result.

Some recipes, such as casseroles and soups, are more flexible than others. A cookie recipe is more adaptable than a cake recipe. Recipes for most baked products can be altered, but recipes for pickles, jellies, and most candies should not be changed.

Modifying a recipe may produce a product that doesn't meet traditional expectations. For example, a cake made with less fat will not have the same flavor or texture as the high-fat version. Cookies with less sugar or fat will still be acceptable but might not look or taste the same as those made by the original recipe. Substituting skim milk for whole milk in puddings, soups and sauces will give a product that is less rich and creamy.

Source: North Central Regional Extension Publications

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The new dietary guidelines recommend eating less fat, sugar, salt and adding more fiber.

Some recommendations are:

- ✓ **Save foods like pastries, snacks, cakes, cookies and candies for special occasions.**
- ✓ **Choose whole grain breads and cereals more often.**
- ✓ **Take smaller portions.**
- ✓ **Modify recipes to decrease the amounts of fat, sugar and salt and to increase amounts of fiber.**
- ✓ **Eat more fruits and vegetables.**

Know Which Ingredients Can Be Changed

Food scientists have found that most people either don't notice much difference or accept the difference that results when the following changes are made.

Substitute whole grain and bran flour

Whole wheat flour can replace from one-fourth to one-half of the all-purpose flour.

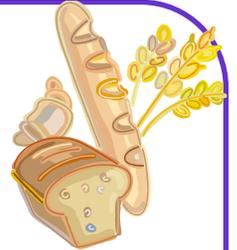
✓ If a recipe has 3 cups all-purpose flour, use 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour and 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour.

Oat bran or oatmeal (that has been ground to flour consistency in a food processor or blender) can replace up to one-fourth of the all-purpose flour.

✓ If a recipe has 3 cups all-purpose flour, use 3/4 cup oat bran or ground oatmeal and 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour.

Bran cereal flour is made by grinding a ready-to-eat cereal such as Bran Buds® or 100% Bran® in a blender or food processor for 60 to 90 seconds. It can replace up to one-fourth of the all-purpose flour.

✓ If a recipe calls for 2 cups all-purpose flour, use 1/2 cup bran flour and 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour.

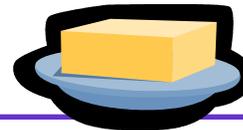


Reduce sugar by one-third

If a recipe says 1 cup, use 2/3 cup. This works best in making puddings and custards. In cookies and cakes try using 1/2 cup sugar per cup of flour. For quick breads and muffins, use 1 tablespoon sugar per cup of flour. To enhance the flavor when sugar is reduced, add vanilla, cinnamon or nutmeg.

Reduce fat by one-third

If a recipe says 1/2 cup, use 1/3 cup. This works best in gravies, sauces, puddings, and some cookies. For cakes and quick breads, use 2 tablespoons fat per cup of flour.



Omit salt or reduce by one-half

If a recipe says 1/2 teaspoon, use 1/4 teaspoon. This may be more acceptable if you gradually reduce the amount each time you make the recipe. Herbs, spices, or salt-free seasoning mixes also can be used as flavor enhancers. Do not eliminate salt from yeast bread or rolls; it is essential for flavor and helps texture.

