

Flakiest Biscuits

Servings: Makes 9 biscuits

Ingredients

- 3 cups King Arthur all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, frozen for 30 minutes (1cup)
- 1 ¼ cups buttermilk, chilled

Steps

1. Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside. Whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt together in large bowl. Coat sticks of butter in flour mixture, then grate 7 tablespoons from each stick on large holes of box grater directly into flour mixture. Toss gently to combine. Set aside remaining 2 tablespoons butter.
2. Add buttermilk to flour mixture and fold with spatula until just combined (dough will look dry). Transfer dough to liberally floured counter. Dust surface of dough with flour; using your floured hands, press dough into rough 7-inch square.
3. Roll dough into 12 by 9-inch rectangle with short side parallel to edge of counter. Starting at bottom of dough, fold into thirds like business letter, using bench scraper or metal spatula to release dough from counter. Press top of dough firmly to seal folds. Turn dough 90 degrees clockwise. Repeat rolling into 12 by 9-inch rectangle, folding into thirds, and turning clockwise 4 more times, for total of 5 sets of folds. After last set of folds, roll dough into 8 1/2-inch square about 1 inch thick. Transfer dough to prepared sheet, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees.
4. Transfer dough to lightly floured cutting board. Using sharp, floured chef's knife, TRIM 1/4 INCH OF DOUGH FROM EACH SIDE OF SQUARE AND DISCARD (YES REALLY). Cut remaining dough into 9 squares, flouring knife after each cut. Arrange biscuits at least 1 inch apart on sheet. Melt reserved butter; brush tops of biscuits with melted butter.
5. Bake until tops are golden brown, 22 to 25 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking. Transfer biscuits to wire rack and let cool for 15 minutes before serving.

Notes

- Why This Recipe Works :
- For the ultimate flaky biscuits, we grate the butter so that it's evenly distributed in the flour mixture, which is key for flakiness. Freezing the butter prior to grating ensures

that it stays in individual pieces throughout the mixing and shaping process. Using a higher-protein all-purpose flour (such as King Arthur) provides the right amount of structure for flakiness (rather than fluffiness, which you'd get with a lower-protein flour) without toughness, while buttermilk gives the biscuits tang and sugar lends complexity. To produce the maximum number of layers, we roll out and fold the dough like a letter five times. Cutting the biscuits into squares is easy and avoids any wasted scraps (or tough rerolls). And finally, we learned that letting the dough rest for 30 minutes and TRIMMING AWAY THE EDGES ENSURES THAT THE BISCUITS RISE UP TALL AND TRUE IN THE OVEN.

- Note from the Test Kitchen :
- We prefer King Arthur all-purpose flour for this recipe, but other brands will work. Use sticks of butter. In hot or humid environments, chill the flour mixture, grater, and work bowls before use. The dough will start out very crumbly and dry in pockets but will be smooth by the end of the folding process; do not be tempted to add extra buttermilk. Flour the counter and the top of the dough as needed to prevent sticking, but be careful not to incorporate large pockets of flour into the dough when folding.
- IMPORTANT READER NOTE :
- I made them as listed, with the exception that I put them in the freezer instead of refrigerating for 30 minutes. I wanted to make them in the morning and bake 4 of them for dinner. I baked them straight from the freezer for 25 minutes. Beeeeeeeeeautiful! The rest are in the freezer waiting to be baked up for breakfast on Sunday.