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Opening extract from
Usborne Christmas Baking for Children

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Published by
Usborne Publishing Ltd

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② * You can replace the butter with dairy-free spread.

Christmas cookies

These vanilla cookies are very simple to make. Cut them into Christmas shapes and decorate them with icing and sugar sprinkles.

Ingredients: 125g (4½oz) butter, softened
50g (2oz) icing sugar
1 medium egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
225g (8oz) plain flour

For the icing:
225g (8oz) icing sugar
2½ tablespoons warm water
You will also need:
some shaped cookie cutters
sugar sprinkles to decorate
❄️ Makes around 35 cookies.



1 First, grease two baking trays. Then, put the butter in a large bowl. Beat it until it is smooth. Use a sieve to sift in the icing sugar. Beat again.



2 Break the egg into a small bowl. Add the vanilla extract and beat well with a fork.



3 Add the egg mixture to the large bowl, a little at a time. Beat well between each addition.



4 Add the flour and stir the mixture until it starts to form a dough. Then, use your hands to mix the dough and squeeze it into a ball.



5 Wrap the dough in plastic foodwrap and put it in the fridge for 30 minutes. Heat the oven to 180°C, 350°F or gas mark 4.




6 Unwrap the dough and put it onto a clean surface. Roll it out until it is just thinner than your little finger. Use the cutters to cut out lots of shapes.

Dust the surface and a rolling pin with flour.



7 Put the cookies onto the trays. Squeeze the scraps together and roll them out again. Cut out more shapes and put them on the trays.



9 For the icing, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and mix it with the warm water. Spread onto each cookie with a blunt knife. Scatter sugar sprinkles on top.

These will keep for up to 5 days in an airtight container.

You could add different flavours to your cookies. Here are some suggestions. Leave out the vanilla and, at step 4, add:

- ❄️ 1 teaspoon of ground cardamom or cinnamon
- ❄️ 2 teaspoons of ground ginger or orange zest

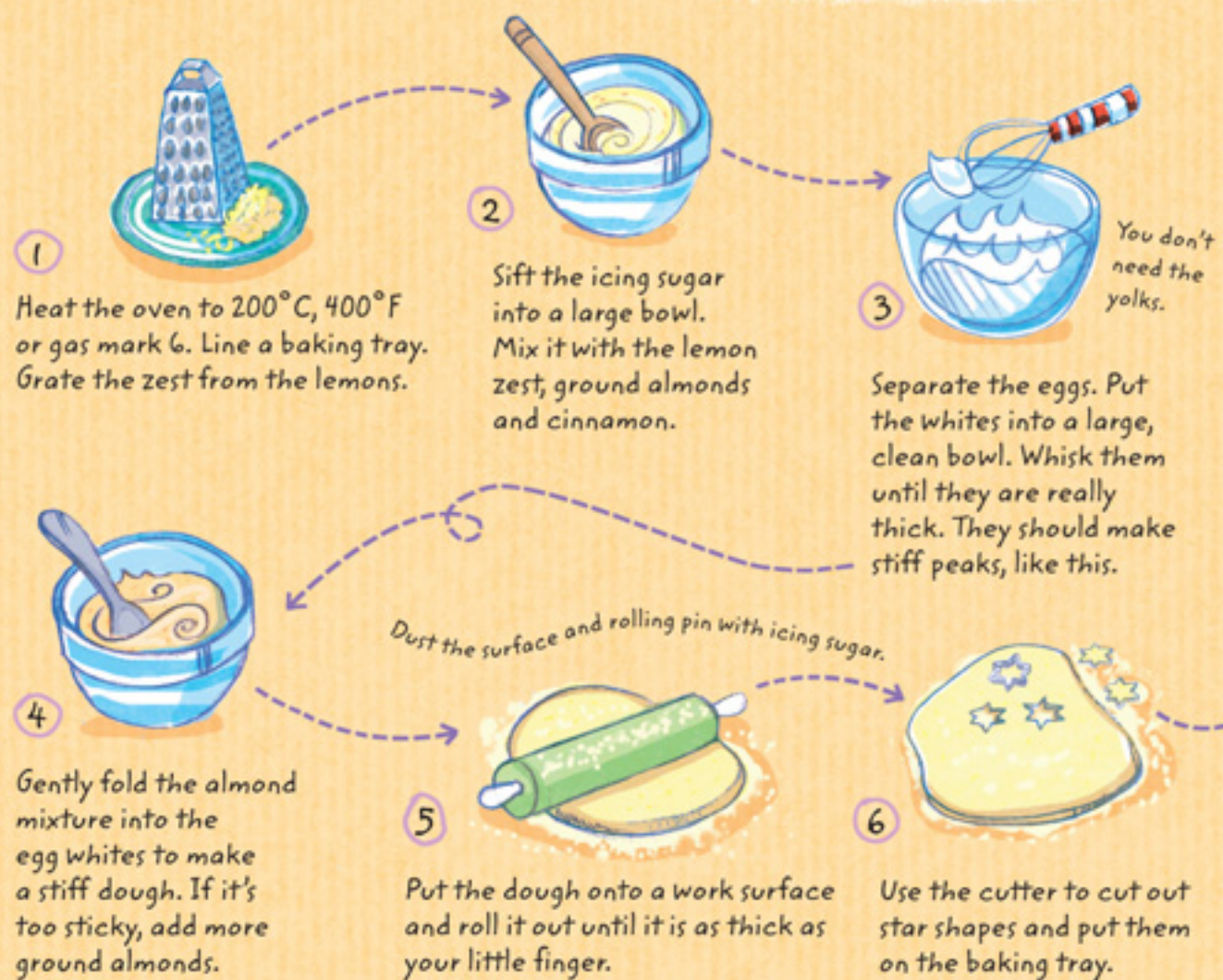


Lemon cinnamon stars

These delicious and chewy biscuits are flavoured with cinnamon and lemon. They are popular in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, where they are known as 'Zimtsterne', meaning cinnamon stars.

Ingredients:
 2 lemons
 250g (9oz) icing sugar
 400g (14oz) ground almonds
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 2 medium eggs

For the lemon icing:
 125g (4½oz) icing sugar
 1½ tablespoons lemon juice
You will also need:
 a small star-shaped cutter
 ☼ Makes around 40 stars.



You could decorate these biscuits with lemon zest. Use a zester to get long curls of zest.

These will keep for up to 5 days in an airtight container.