

• A PANCAKE & WAFFLE PRIMER •

BASIC PANCAKES OR WAFFLES

Pancakes or waffles make the basis for many great meals because they go together so quickly and they're so versatile. This basic recipe makes enough for a good-sized hungry family (two or three adolescents with leftovers to freeze if you are lucky) but can easily be cut in half to accommodate smaller or fewer appetites.

As with muffins you can actually leave the butter or oil out of the batter. (Just make sure your griddle or waffle iron is well greased though.) The total calorie count is, of course, dependent on what you put on top. You can use butter and maple syrup which is traditional in the Northeast. For a low-calorie, calcium- and vitamin-rich meal, try them with unsweetened yogurt and sliced, slightly sweetened fresh fruit.

- 4 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 to 4 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 4 eggs
- 1 quart buttermilk, yogurt or sour milk (or 1 quart sweet milk with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar or lemon juice plus 5 minutes to clabber)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 stick) melted butter or vegetable oil (optional)

Mixing: In a large bowl, mix the dry ingredients thoroughly.

In a second bowl, beat the eggs and buttermilk together until they are light and fluffy. Add the butter or oil. Take about 20 seconds and blend this mixture into the dry ingredients. Don't overdo it. Pancake and waffle batter is like muffin batter; a light hand in mixing means a light pancake on the plate.

Cooking: For successful pancakes, use a griddle that heats evenly. Cast iron is particularly good. Preheat and grease your griddle or waffle iron.

• **Pancakes:** To test for correct pancake cooking temperature, sprinkle a few drops of water onto your griddle. The water should "dance." Using a quarter-cup measure or an ice cream scoop, pour your batter onto the griddle leaving enough space for each pancake to expand. Turn them when the bubbles on the top surface pop and don't fill in. The second side takes only half the amount of time needed to cook the first.

If you are using a well-seasoned cast iron frying pan or "spider" (see page 67), or a non-stick griddle, and if the batter has butter or vegetable oil in it, it probably won't be necessary to grease the pan after the first batch. Pancakes can be stockpiled in the oven on "low."