Common Baking Mistakes to Avoid

When you don’t have a lot of experience with baking, you might be following a recipe, but are still making some mistakes people have a tendency to make. These mistakes might seem minor, but they do make a difference in how the final results turn out. If your cake is dry or your pie seems off in the flavor department, it might be due to some of these common mistakes.

**Using Cold Ingredients**

You should never use ingredients that just came out of the refrigerator or freezer unless a recipe specifically calls for it. Generally when you start baking, you pull all of the ingredients out of the refrigerator or pantry and set them on the counter while doing your prep work and preheating the oven. This doesn’t just make it easier to get the right measurements and make sure you don’t forget anything, but helps those cold ingredients, like butter, get to room temperature.

**Not Preheating the Oven**

This is another thing that seems like such a minor thing, but does actually make a drastic difference in how everything turns out. If your oven isn’t preheated, then it isn’t going to cook at the right temperature the entire time. For the first 5 minutes, it might bake at 300 degrees because that is how long it takes to reach 350 or 400. This often results in baked goods that are not completely done on the inside. Inconsistent baking temperatures can also cause the inside to be perfect but the outside to be crispy and burnt. Take the few extra minutes it takes to preheat the oven properly.

**Using Baking Sheets Incorrectly**

The baking sheets you use for cookies are also important. First of all, make sure you are not using cookie sheets that have high sides. These might seem like a good idea, but they aren’t necessary for cookies and can create inconsistent cooking times. The general recommendation is to use dark and shiny cookie sheets with no side edges. They are easier to handle and bake at the right times. Also make sure your cookie sheets are cooking between batches, otherwise they will cause some of your cookies to burn on the bottom.

**Not Using Separate Dry and Liquid Measuring Cups**

When you are measuring out ingredients, you should have one set of cups for liquid and one set for dry. To make it easier to remember, most people use the taller 2-cup glass measuring cups for all liquids, then the smaller plastic or stainless steel measuring cups for the dry ingredients. This makes it easy to separate them. If you mix the ingredients together before it is time, you get inaccurate measurements and a lot of issues occur with the final dishes.