



GLUTEN FREE BAKING 101

How to Make and Use Gluten Free All Purpose Flour

by Anne Marck

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Introduction

Many gluten free cooks will tell you that gluten free all-purpose flour is a myth; that there isn't anything that can be measured cup-for-cup in all your wheat recipes to modify them for gluten free diets. And they would be right. Almost. I'm about to introduce you to a recipe that is as close as you will ever come to achieving this myth. This gluten free flour mix is suitable for converting almost any wheat recipe to gluten free. It works equally well in cookies, cakes, breads, you name it. I should know. I've been using it for almost twenty years and getting great results.

Gluten free flours lack the properties of wheat flour, properties that make wheat flour rise, produce a moist crumb, and stay together without crumbling and falling apart. These are things that you can only recreate by combining flours and adding a binding agent to hold it all together. Most cookbooks do this by measuring each gluten free ingredient in different quantities, depending on the properties needed in any given recipe. For instance, a batter recipe may be very easy to reproduce gluten free, whereas, yeast breads are a lot more temperamental. Most gluten free cooks manipulate their flour ingredients to allow for these differences, which does indeed make gluten free *all-purpose* flour a myth.

But when I started working with gluten free flours almost twenty years ago, I didn't know that. What I knew is that I wanted something I could mix and use in all of my recipes, without the mess and bother of measuring several flour ingredients for every recipe. No one told me I couldn't put all of those ingredients together and make something that would work for all applications. Several months of testing, creating, re-testing, and fiddling with flour showed me that I could indeed use the same flour mixture in multiple recipes with success.

The trick, I found, was that I could use the same flour mixture by simply knowing in what ways other ingredients needed to be modified. As I worked with various gluten free flours, I found a body of information emerging that could be consistently applied over and over again to generate success.

For instance, I learned that rice flour is bland and needs extra flavoring. This is something I could apply to everything. I also learned that rice flour tends to be very dry and adding fruit (i.e. applesauce) or vegetables (i.e. pumpkin) to my recipes produced better results. I learned that you can't make a dough ball with rice flour when baking yeast breads. It is simply too heavy to rise properly. That conclusion lead me to make yeast breads from sticky batters and add more eggs to assist with loft and crumb. Long story short, rather than manipulating flour ingredients differently for every recipe, I manipulated everything else.

This may sound complicated, but surprisingly, I discovered that my flour mixture could be used in simple recipes with almost no modifications, or at least just minor ones. Most of the recipes I changed to gluten free started as recipes from old cookbooks. Yeast breads were the exception, but even there I found success by applying a few basic rules. It is incredibly exciting to discover you can still bake what you love from your favorite recipes! Now, I'm going to show you how.

Gluten Free Baking 101

Follow these rules and tips for gluten free baking success!

1. Read the entire recipe before beginning and follow all instructions carefully.
2. Use commercial measuring cups and spoons (*do not* use teacups or flatware for measuring your ingredients). All measures should be scraped level, but not tapped or packed down, unless specified.
3. Baking pan size is important so try to use the size listed in the recipe. Heavy aluminum, non-stick, or glass baking pans work best. Products that have been baked on insulated cookie sheets sometimes do not brown well and very dark pans will burn.
4. Gluten free flours work best when used in combination and require binding agents such as xanthan or guar gums. For best results, prepare all recipes as written without omitting or substituting ingredients.
5. Alternative ingredients have been listed, where possible, for replacing ingredients that may be problematic for some individuals. If you do use substitutions, follow these suggestions:
 - Butter:* If you use margarine in place of butter, choose one with at least 70% fat content. Lower fat content margarine contains more water, which may affect product results. If you use shortening in place of margarine or butter, you may need to add 2 TBS water per cup of shortening plus a pinch of salt.
 - Milk:* Using milk in recipes produces a lighter, moister product and better browning. However, milk substitutes such as soy, rice, coconut or nut milks may be used with success. Rice and coconut milks typically brown better than nut or soy milks, particularly if they are the sweetened variety. When using coconut milk, choose the carton variety, not the full fat kind in a can, which is actually more like cream.
 - Eggs:* An egg substitute such as Ener-G Foods Egg Replacer, may be used in some recipes, where indicated. If you use an egg substitute in recipes where it is not indicated the final product will be heavier.
6. Batter and dough made with rice flour looks and feels different than that made with wheat flour. Stickier, softer dough produces a moister final product. The dough for yeast breads and pizza crusts can be difficult to spread. Use a spoon or fingertips moistened with water to spread the dough and smooth the top. Dough for biscuits, cookies, pie crust, etc. is soft and fragile. Use a minimum of dusting flour and handle the dough as little as possible, using waxed paper where indicated. Cover the bowl with a damp dishcloth while working with divided portions to keep dough moist.
 - If your dough seems too sticky, or your batter too thin, let the mixture “stand” for about five minutes to allow all the liquid to be absorbed into the flour before you decide to add something more to the recipe (such as more flour or more liquid). This also helps with the gritty texture sometimes resulting from the use of rice flour in baking; and applies to converting your wheat recipes to gluten free as well.

7. Baked goods made with gluten free flours tend to be heavier and more crumbly and they dry out faster than those made with wheat. Slice bread loaves after cooling thoroughly, but before they have had a chance to sit and dry out. Toasting or using a microwave to freshen day old breads before serving is helpful. Store cookies, crackers, etc. in airtight containers or zipper seal bags to keep fresh and use within one week.

8. Gluten free breads mold or sour rapidly and should be refrigerated, tightly wrapped, if not used within 2–3 days. I prefer to slice the entire loaf and refrigerate it after the first 24 hours from baking.

After cooling and slicing, yeast breads may be frozen and then thawed in the toaster, although they will be a little more crumbly after freezing. Other baked items such as cookies, pies, muffins and cakes, can be stored in the refrigerator or frozen for later use.

9. Allow gluten free baked goods to stand and cool to warm before cutting or serving. If cut or served when very hot, they will be too sticky. Cool thoroughly before bagging as they tend to hold moisture for a long time and will sweat in the plastic.

Gluten Free All Purpose Flour Recipe

This gluten free all-purpose flour is easy to make and requires ingredients that are readily available at most grocery stores or natural food stores. If you can't find them in your area, I have listed on-line suppliers in [Gluten Free Ingredient Suppliers](#).

Unlike many commercial blends, this flour is not made up entirely of starch. The brown rice and chickpea flours add important protein and fiber. They also serve to provide more flavor and texture to the mix. The quantity below is enough to try at least three of the recipes that follow. Once you've tried it, you will probably want to mix it in bulk, which is what I do!

Makes 5 cups of flour

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups brown rice flour
- 1 cup white rice flour
- 1 cup potato starch—*not flour, they are different*
- ½ cup tapioca starch (aka tapioca flour)
- ½ cup sweet rice flour
- ½ cup chickpea flour (aka garbanzo bean)¹
- 1 TBS xanthan gum²

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix until well combined; or place ingredients in a large zipper seal bag, close the bag, and shake until well combined.
2. Store tightly covered or sealed in a cool, dry place.
3. Use within approximately 6 months, as brown rice flour will go rancid. Freezing or refrigerating will prolong shelf life.

Cook's Notes:

Quick Prep Tips—Here's how I make flour preparation fast and easy. I store all of my bulk gluten free flour ingredients in zipper seal bags and keep them all together in a large plastic tub. Using a permanent marker on a gallon size zipper seal bag, I write the GF All Purpose Flour recipe (or keep a recipe card in the tub). When I need to make a new batch of flour, I pull the tub out of the cupboard, measure the ingredients from the bags straight into the marked zipper seal bag and shake. That's it. I'm done. There's no need to look up a recipe, pull multiple canisters from the cupboard, or wash mixing bowls. It doesn't matter if there is flour left over in the marked bag from the last recipe and I can use the marked bag over and over until it wears out. Using this method, I can mix up a whole batch of flour once a week in about fifteen minutes. If you want to make a really large batch, a big flour canister with a tight fitting lid works well for mixing and storing the flour.

¹ If you don't tolerate chickpea flour (aka garbanzo bean) and/or do not like the taste, golden flaxseed meal or rice bran may be substituted and should produce reasonable results. I have used these substitutions successfully in some recipes, although most of the recipes have been tested using chickpea flour. The biggest difference, if you use one of these substitutes, is in how much liquid the flour will absorb.

² If preferred, guar gum may be used instead of xanthan gum. Guar gum may be a problem for some individuals due to fiber content.



Pancakes

Fluffy, moist, you won't believe how good these are until you've tried them.

Makes about 5–6 pancakes

Ingredients:

1 cup GF All Purpose Flour
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
1 TBS sugar
1 egg¹
¾ cup + 2 TBS milk²
2 TBS vegetable oil

Directions:

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a small mixing bowl and whisk until smooth.
2. Heat griddle on medium high and coat with vegetable oil or baking spray.

3. Pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup batter onto hot griddle. If batter doesn't spread well, use the flat side of a large spoon to spread it out a bit.
4. Pancakes are ready to turn when small bubbles form on the surface or when golden brown on one side.
5. Lightly brown both sides and serve immediately.

¹For Egg Free: Omit egg and use $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Ener-G Egg Replacer and 2 TBS water. Egg free version will be heavier.

²For Dairy Free: Soy, rice, coconut, or nut milks may be substituted for the dairy milk. If using a thinner type milk such as rice or skim, use 1–2 TBS less. Rice and coconut milks brown better than soy or nut milks.



Basic Muffins

A basic muffin recipe to get you started. You can add almost anything to this simple recipe. Chocolate chips, raisins, spices or nuts. Get creative!

Makes 6 muffins

Ingredients:

1 cup GF All Purpose Flour
1½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
⅓ cup sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten[†]
½ cup milk[‡]
3 TBS butter or margarine, melted
1 tsp vanilla

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a small mixing bowl combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar.

3. In a separate bowl lightly whisk the egg, then add milk, butter, and vanilla, and whisk together.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir with a spoon, just until moistened.
5. Divide the batter evenly between 6 greased or paper lined muffin cups. Cups will be about $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
6. Bake for 15–18 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean.
7. Cool muffins in pan for about 5 minutes before removing.

¹ For Egg Free: Omit the egg. Whisk together 1½ tsp Ener-G Egg Replacer with 2 TBS water and add to wet ingredients. Muffins will be a bit heavier than those made with eggs.

² For Dairy Free: Soy, rice, coconut, or nut milks may be substituted for the dairy milk. Rice and coconut milks brown better than soy or nut milks.



Pizza Crust

No one should have to go without pizza. Now you don't have to.

Makes one 12" round pizza crust

Ingredients:

2 cups GF All Purpose Flour
3/4 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
1 regular dry yeast packet (2 tsp)—*do not use rapid rise yeast.*
3/4 cup warm water
1/2 tsp vinegar
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 TBS vegetable oil

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Combine flour and salt in a large bowl.

3. In a separate small bowl, combine warm water, sugar, yeast and vinegar and let stand until it foams (about ten minutes).
4. Add water mixture, egg, and vegetable oil to dry ingredients. Mix thoroughly with a heavy spoon or electric mixer on medium for about one minute.
5. Spread a generous layer of vegetable oil on a 12" round pizza pan and sprinkle with cornmeal¹.
6. Roll or pat dough out on a piece of plastic wrap dusted lightly with GF All Purpose Flour. Dough will be very sticky so do this with a very light hand and use a little dusting flour on top of the dough so it won't stick. See below for an alternate method.
7. Invert dough over the pan and spread dough evenly to the very edge of the pan.
8. Prick crust several times with a fork.
9. Cover with a slightly damp dish cloth and place in a warm place to rise for about 30–35 minutes. The stove top works well for this while the oven is preheating.
10. Bake 10–15 minutes, then remove from the oven and add sauce, your favorite toppings and cheese.
11. Return to the oven and bake until done, approximately 10–15 more minutes or until cheese is bubbly, and crust is golden brown and crisp on the bottom.

Cook's Notes:

An alternate method for spreading the dough is to simply put it on the prepared pan and work it with your hands, fingertips or palms. Use a little vegetable oil on your hands, or if you prefer not to use oil, use a little water so your fingers don't stick to the dough. This makes a medium to thick crust if you use a round 12" pizza pan. For a thinner crust, use a larger pizza pan.

¹ If you don't tolerate corn, you can substitute sorghum flour on the bottom of the pans, or just use the oil. Cornmeal helps the crust to brown and crisp on the bottom.



Chocolate Chip Cookies

You're going to love this recipe. These are the ones you remember before your gluten free diet. Welcome back!

Makes about 2½ dozen cookies

Ingredients:

¾ cup sugar
¾ cup packed brown sugar
1 cup firm butter
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla
2½ cups GF All Purpose Flour
1 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°.

2. In a large bowl combine sugars, butter, egg and vanilla and beat until combined.
3. In a small bowl combine flour, soda and salt.
4. Add flour mixture to wet ingredients and mix until dough begins to form, then add chips and stir to combine all ingredients.
5. Measure dough by generous tablespoons and roll into 1" balls; place on an ungreased cookie sheet about 2" apart.
6. Bake 8–10 minutes or just until light brown.
7. Allow to cool a little before removing from baking sheet.

Cook's Notes:

Use butter that is firm, but not hard and cold. If the butter is too soft the cookies will flatten out when baked. These cookies are best eaten warm and then stored in a tightly covered container so they don't harden. To avoid hard cookies, try putting a piece of orange peel in your cookie canister to keep them soft.



Vanilla Cake

Moist vanilla cupcakes, birthday cake, or as a base for strawberry shortcakes. This recipe is versatile and super simple to make.

Makes 9 squares, 8 wedges, or 12 cupcakes

Ingredients:

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups GF All Purpose Flour
2 tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt (scant)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, softened
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
1 tsp vanilla
2 eggs

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large bowl combine sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla and beat until smooth.

3. In a separate small bowl combine flour, baking powder, and salt.
4. Add flour mixture to wet ingredients alternating with the milk.
5. Mix on medium speed for about 1–2 minutes.
6. Pour batter into a sprayed or greased and floured 8" x 8" square or 9" round baking pan.
7. Bake 25–35 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean.
8. Cool on wire rack before frosting.

For Cupcakes:

Fill twelve sprayed or paper lined muffin cups about $\frac{2}{3}$ full. Bake 20–25 minutes. One recipe of Vanilla Buttercream will frost twelve cupcakes.

For a 9" Two Layer Cake:

Double the recipe. Bake in two 9" round pans for 25–30 minutes. Double the Vanilla Buttercream recipe to cover two layers.

For a 9" x 13" Cake:

Double the recipe. Bake in a 9" x 13" baking pan for 35–40 minutes. Double the Vanilla Buttercream recipe to cover the larger cake.

Vanilla Buttercream

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla
1–2 TBS milk or half-and-half
2 cups powdered sugar
dash salt

Directions:

1. Whip butter until fluffy.
2. Add vanilla, milk, powdered sugar and salt.
3. Whip again until fluffy and smooth.
4. Frost cake when cool to the touch.

Converting Wheat Recipes to Gluten Free

Here are those special rules I told you about. Using the GF All Purpose Flour and these simple instructions, you can convert your favorite wheat recipes to gluten free.

1. Start with *easy* recipes that you have prepared before and are familiar with. Recipes that are simple and forgiving will help you feel confident with the GF All Purpose Flour before you try something more difficult.

2. For batter recipes, (pancakes, muffins, quick breads, cakes) use the GF All Purpose Flour measure for measure. If the batter is too thick, add an additional 2–4 TBS liquid per cup of whatever liquid is called for in your recipe (water, milk, etc.), until the desired consistency has been reached. Most batter recipes can be prepared exactly as written, simply substituting the wheat flour with GF All Purpose Flour.

If your dough seems too sticky, or your batter too thin, let the mixture “stand” for about five minutes to allow all the liquid to be absorbed into the flour before you decide to add something more to the recipe (such as more flour or more liquid). This will also help avoid the gritty texture that rice flour sometimes produces in gluten free baking.

3. Cakes: Converting cake recipes to gluten free usually requires little or no modification. If you find your cakes coming out heavy, try adding an extra 1–2 eggs per recipe. Small pans work best when baking cakes; i.e. cupcakes, round 9” or square 8” baking pans. You can bake cakes in larger pans, such as 9” x 13”, but be sure they are baked all the way through in the middle. Check for doneness with a wooden pick inserted in the center, which should come out clean; and the top should spring back when lightly touched with a fingertip.

4. Cookies: Converting cookie recipes to gluten free usually requires little or no modification. If you find that the dough is too soft, add 2–4 TBS extra GF All Purpose Flour per cup of wheat flour called for in your recipe. Keep in mind that dough should be slightly softer than dough made with wheat. Refrigerating soft dough for an hour or more is helpful. Most cookie recipes can be prepared exactly as written, simply substituting the wheat flour with GF All Purpose Flour. Shortbread type recipes may be crumbly and might respond well to a slight decrease in fat (butter, shortening, etc.), as rice flours do not absorb fats well. Adding egg white to these may help hold cookies together better.

5. Yeast Breads: Converting yeast bread recipes to gluten free requires significant modifications and some experimentation. These guidelines are simply a place to start. Gluten free yeast breads should be made from batters that are thick and pasty. Do not attempt to make a dough ball with the gluten free flour (as you would if making wheat bread), as the bread will be too heavy to rise properly.

Start with the liquid ingredients in your recipe, plus 2–4 eggs per loaf (depending on the size of the loaf). Then begin adding the GF All Purpose Flour until the desired consistency is reached. Adding eggs to bread recipes produces lighter bread that will raise better. Adding an additional leavening agent such as baking soda or baking powder (about 1/2–1 tsp per loaf) also helps if bread is turning out heavy and dense. Using milk instead of water will produce a lighter, moister loaf. Here is an approximate ratio to start your experimentation: 1/2 cup liquid to 1 egg and about 1 1/3 cups flour.

Do not raise yeast breads more than 1/4" to 1/2" above the top of the bread pan. Gluten free rice breads may also require longer baking times; approximately 50 minutes for a 9" x 5" loaf.

6. Rice flours and starch tend to be bland and less flavorful than wheat flour. Increasing the flavorings or adding flavors where none are called for (such as vanilla) is helpful. Butter instead of shortening or oil may be a good substitute in some recipes, to add flavor and moisture (although rice flours do not absorb fats well, so don't add extra). Fruits and vegetables (such as applesauce or pumpkin puree) added to rice baking also help add moisture and flavor.

7. GF All Purpose Flour can be used as a substitute for wheat flour, measure for measure, in recipes for sauces, stew, gravy, and as a coating for meat. It is also suitable for use as dusting flour when rolling out dough and for flouring greased pans.

If you are starting with a recipe that is already gluten free, but uses different gluten free flours; simply add all of the separate flour measures together and substitute the total measure with GF All Purpose Flour.

Gluten Free Ingredient Suppliers

Included here are links to manufacturers and suppliers for the ingredients in the GF All Purpose Flour, although most of these can be found in natural food or specialty stores. If you are celiac or extremely sensitive to gluten exposure, buy pre-packaged products, rather than from bulk bins, to avoid the risk of cross contamination.

Bob's Red Mill sells all the ingredients for the Gluten Free All Purpose Flour, and they are all available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) in the [Grocery & Gourmet Food](#) section. This is particularly convenient if you have an [Amazon Prime](#) account that covers shipping and gets your stuff delivered to your door really quick.

The Gluten Free Mall and The Gluten Free Trading Company are retail warehouse type suppliers of every form of gluten free food imaginable, including bulk baking ingredients. Purchasing everything you need from a single supplier will help you save money on shipping costs.

[The Gluten Free Mall](#): Distributor of retail gluten free products, including cereal, cookies, crackers, bread, pasta, snacks, etc., as well as gluten free baking ingredients from multiple manufacturers.

[Gluten Free Trading Company, LLC](#): Distributor of retail gluten free products, many manufacturers including Authentic Foods, Flavorganics, Rumford (gluten free baking powder), Bob's Red Mill, Ener-G Foods, and more.

The companies below are primarily suppliers of gluten free baking ingredients.

[Arrowhead Mills](#): Baking ingredients including golden flaxseeds, tapioca starch, and white rice flour.

[Authentic Foods](#): Baking ingredients including chickpea (aka garbanzo) flour, brown, sweet, and white rice flours, potato starch, sorghum flour, tapioca starch, gluten free vanilla powder, guar and xanthan gums, etc.

[Bickford Flavors](#): Wide selection of gluten free flavorings.

[Bob's Red Mill](#): Baking ingredients including brown flaxseed meal, brown rice flour, chickpea (aka garbanzo) flour, egg replacer, golden flaxseed meal, rice bran, sorghum flour, potato starch, sweet rice flour, tapioca starch, white rice flour, guar and xanthan gums, etc.

[Ener-G Foods](#): Baking ingredients including egg replacer, brown, white, and sweet rice flours, potato starch, tapioca starch, xanthan gum, etc.

[Flavorganics](#): Organic gluten free flavorings and syrups.

Books by Anne

COMING SOON!

Bake it Better Gluten Free Sampler #1 (First In A Series):

Learn how to bake gluten free breads, pizza crust, cookies, cakes, and more...foods you thought you couldn't have on your gluten free diet! Using a gluten free all-purpose flour recipe and simple, easy to follow instructions, you can get baked goodies back on your menu. The gluten free all-purpose flour is versatile, economical, and easy to prepare; and it can be used to convert your own favorite recipes to gluten free.

Full of beautiful photographs and step by step instructions, plus special Cook's Notes with extra tips, you can't help but be successful. Also provided with many of the recipes are instructions on how to bake egg and dairy free.

Also, watch for the second book in the Bake It Better Gluten Free Series, "**Bake it Better Gluten Free Sampler #2**" **Coming in 2016!**

"The Beginner's Guide to Going Gluten Free Without Going Broke or Living in the Kitchen"

All the information you need for going on a gluten free diet including menu, recipes, and shopping list. This guide will get you started and help you stay on your diet without spending hours in the kitchen or losing a fortune on gluten free foods. Anne has put together a simple to follow system with lots of information about gluten free living, label reading, meal and menu planning, shopping and dining out tips, and more.

Even if you are an accomplished gluten free foodie, you'll find information here to enhance your gluten free lifestyle. Included with the book is access to an exclusive readers only page with links to resources, support, printable worksheets, and a complete recipe PDF of all the recipes from the book. Don't miss this one!

Be sure to follow Anne on [Facebook](#) to get updates on book release dates and FREE promotions!

Happy Gluten Free Baking! ☺

About the Author

Anne Marck is an entrepreneur, writer, baker, mom, herbalist, licensed massage therapist, and medical office manager; although not necessarily in that order. In her spare time she has homeschooled and raised seven kids and managed three successful businesses; among them a gluten free baking mix company. Her favorite things include entertaining family (translation: cooking and baking for them), reading voraciously, music, and chocolate. Yes, in that order. Publishing gluten free recipes has been a long time dream; the fulfillment of a promise to many people, who have requested these recipes for years (sorry it took me so long guys!). She currently lives in Spring Lake, Utah, with her two youngest children.