



### Don't eat Eggs? No Problem!

What do eggs do? Well in baking they are there to leaven, or to act as a binder. For flat foods or recipes that don't rely on the eggs for lift, you can often just leave them out, although you will need to replace the liquid to keep the moisture content the same. When 3 eggs or more are called for, you will need to replace them with something that has a similar function.

All of the following can be used to replace eggs in (mainly) sweet baked goods. Quantities are roughly equivalent to **one** egg:

- 1 small or 1/2 large banana
- 2 tbsp mango
- 2 tbsp mashed/pureed pumpkin or squash
- 2 tbsp apple sauce/puree. Pears work too.

These all work well in cakes or muffins. You could also add an extra 1/2 tsp baking powder for a little extra 'lightness'.

For biscuits a slightly different approach is needed.

1 egg =

- 2 1/2 tbsp ground flaxseeds beaten with 3 tbsp water (you end up with a gluey liquid). This is my personal favourite method.
- 1 tsp soya flour blended with 1 tbsp water
- 2 tbsp cornflour beaten with 3 tbsp water

In other baked goods recipes you could also try mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes, as long as they are slightly wet, or you adjust the other liquid in the recipe.

Savoury recipes offer a wider range of opportunities for egg replacement. In these eggs are usually the 'glue' that holds together the burger or meat/nut loaf, or thickens the casserole. What you use depends on what degree of 'stick' you need, and whether something will work as a flavour in the finished dish. You'll probably need to experiment a little – but then cooking is science and you're worth it!

Where the egg is purely to bind, try 2-3 tbsp of the following per egg. You can use them singly, or in combination:

- Tomato puree
- Arrowroot
- Cornflour
- Mashed potato/sweet potato
- Oat or bean flour
- Fine breadcrumbs or matzo meal

## No Butter? How, Why, What?

It is simple enough to use the same weight of margarine instead of butter. But there are issues around these as well – hydrogenation, palm or soya oils being three! Alternatively you can use liquid oils in their place. Usually you need around 2/3 of the amount of oil as you would a solid fat.

If you are looking to reduce the fat content overall in baked goods you can also substitute (some or all) fat with pureed prunes, apples or pears. However, if you are also substituting the eggs in the recipe it's worth adding a little (extra) baking powder to 'lighten' the finished product a little.

But having said all that...

## Shortbread

This is something for which you will need to use a 'set' fat to give the crumbliest, most moreish result.... Personal recommendation is Suma Sunflower Spread (which has no trans fats or soya, but does contain some palm oil).

For a *huge* batch:

- **320g softened fat**
- **160g sugar**
- **2-4 tsp favoured flower or leafy herb** – we've tried lavender, rose petals, rosemary and basil with great results. Coriander isn't bad either!
- **480g plain flour (or 320g flour and 160g cornflour)**

Cream together fat and sugar, and beat until fluffy. Beat in the choice of flavouring. Sift the flour into the creamed mixture, and work to a smooth dough. Roll, cut (or not) as desired, and bake at 170 Celcius for 10-25 mins (10 mins for individual biscuits, up to 25 mins for traditional forms). It should still be slightly soft as it emerges, as it will harden as it cools.

We also make these with vanilla sugar but no flowers/herbs, and also plain with studs of candied lemon peel pushed in just as they come out of the oven.

In theory shortbread should work with cacao butter or coconut butter, but in practice I find the finished product too like pastry. Hence I might make shortbread dough with coconut if I will be using it as the base and topping of an apricot or date bar, or as the base of a 'cheese' cake.

Chunks of shortbread dough (or indeed any cookie dough – being egg-free makes the raw dough safer for the very young, old or immune compromised) work *really* well in ice cream.