

Measuring Up

Recipes call for cups, tablespoons and teaspoons—and some measures in between. To be sure you have good results in the kitchen, accurate measuring is important. Here's the scoop on what to use and how to measure up for preparation success every time you're in the kitchen.

How to Measure

We use two different types of measuring cups in our test kitchens for accurate results: dry measuring cups and liquid measuring cups. They're both

convenient to use and give consistent results time after time when used correctly. Here's how to be sure you measure accurately:

Dry Measuring Cups



Nesting metal or plastic cups usually range in size from 1/4 cup to 1 cup but some sets may include other measures such as 1/8 (2 tablespoons), 2/3, 3/4 and 2 cup.

Use them to measure dry ingredients like flour, sugar and oats, as well as solid fats like butter, margarine and shortening or peanut butter. Do not use these cups for liquids because amounts will not be accurate; recipes are developed using glass measuring cups for liquids.



For flour, granulated and powdered sugars, spoon lightly into the cup, then level it off with the straight edge of a metal spatula or knife. Today's flours are presifted before packaging, so sifting again isn't necessary. Sift powdered sugar before measuring only if it's lumpy.



For cereal, dry bread crumbs and oats, pour into the cup then level off with the straight edge of a metal spatula or knife.

For shredded cheese, chopped nuts, coconut and soft bread crumbs, spoon into the cup and pat down very lightly.



For peanut butter, butter, margarine, shortening and brown sugar, spoon into the cup and pack down firmly with a spatula or spoon then level off.

Measuring Spoons



These graduated metal and plastic spoons range in size from 1/4 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon but some sets may contain a 1/8 teaspoon and a 3/4 teaspoon. Use spoons to measure liquids and dry ingredients. If you cook and bake often, it's convenient to have two sets, one for dry ingredients and another for wet ingredients.



For dry ingredients or thick liquids, pour or scoop into the spoon until full, then level off with the straight edge of a metal spatula or knife.

For thin liquids, pour into the spoon until full.



Liquid Measuring Cups



The glass or plastic cups for measuring liquids come in 1-, 2-, 4- and 8-cup sizes. To get an accurate reading, place the measuring cup on a flat surface and read the measurement at eye level. Angled plastic measuring cups let you read the measurement from the top of the cup.



Before measuring sticky liquids like honey, molasses and corn syrup, lightly spray the inside of the cup with cooking spray or wipe lightly with vegetable oil--no sticking!

Abbreviations for Measuring

Be prepared. Not many abbreviations are used in our recipes, but other recipes use more. We've listed some common ones for easy reference.

teaspoon = t or tsp
tablespoon = T or Tbsp
cup = c
ounce = oz
pint = pt
quart = qt
gallon = gal
pound = lb or #
degrees = °

Equal Measures

Are these measurements the same? In our recipes we use the larger measurement – 1/4 cup, instead of 4 tablespoons, since that's easier to measure—though they mean the same thing. Use this chart for other measuring you do in the kitchen.

3 teaspoons	=	1 tablespoon
4 tablespoons	=	1/4 cup
5 tablespoons + 1 tsp	=	1/3 cup
8 tablespoons	=	1/2 cup
16 tablespoons	=	1 cup (8 ounces)
2 cups	=	1 pint (16 ounces)
4 cups	=	1 quart (32 ounces)
2 quarts	=	1/2 gallon (64 ounces)
4 quarts	=	1 gallon (128 ounces)
1/2 cup butter	=	1 stick of butter = 8 Tbsp