

Traditional Chocolate Chip Cookies

MAKES ABOUT 3 1/2 DOZEN COOKIES They are thin and crisp around the edges, thicker and a bit cakier in the middle. I bake the cookies on ungreased sheets but lining the sheets with parchment will make cleanup easier. When the cookies come out of the oven, they are very soft. Let them cool on the sheets for a minute or two before transferring them to a rack.

2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour + 2 Tablespoons
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup light or dark brown sugar, packed
½ cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ teaspoon water
2 cups semisweet chocolate chips + ½ if you like more
1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)

Adjust oven racks to upper- and lower-middle positions and heat oven to 375 degrees. Whisk flour, salt, and baking soda together in medium bowl set aside.

Either by hand or with electric mixer, cream together butter and sugars until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes with mixer set at medium speed. Scrape sides of bowl with rubber spatula. Add eggs, vanilla, and water. Beat until combined, about 40 seconds. Scrape sides of bowl.

Add dry ingredients and beat at low speed until just combined, 15 to 20 seconds. Add chocolate chips and nuts and stir until combined.

Drop batter by tablespoons onto ungreased cookie sheets, spacing pieces of dough about 1 inch apart. Bake, reversing position of cookie sheets halfway through baking (from top to bottom and front to back), until cookies are light golden brown and outer edges begin to crisp, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool cookies on sheets for 1 to 2 minutes before transferring to cooling racks with wide spatula.