

Oatmeal Crisps

(about 70 cookies)

A good, basic oatmeal cookie—thin, crisp, and slightly coarse with oatmeal and nuts.

16 tablespoons (2 sticks or 1 cup) butter, softened	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup brown sugar	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup granulated sugar	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 eggs, beaten	3 cups uncooked oatmeal (not instant)
1 1/2 cups flour	1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Combine the butter, brown sugar, and 1/2 cup of the granulated sugar, and beat until well blended and creamy. Add the eggs and beat until light and fluffy.

Stir and toss together the flour, nutmeg, salt, and baking soda and add them to the first mixture, beating until completely mixed. Add the oatmeal and optional nuts, and stir just until mixed. This is a very soft dough, and although you can form and bake the cookies at this point, the dough will be easier to handle if you chill it for about 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and get out some cookie sheets about 10 to 15 minutes before you form the cookies.

Put the remaining 1/2 cup granulated sugar in a small, shallow dish. Take tablespoon bits of the dough and roll them into balls between the palms of your hands, then roll them in the sugar. Place on the ungreased cookie sheets, leaving about 1 1/2 inches between. Using your moistened fingertips or the bottom of a wet glass (see p. 194), flatten each cookie into a disk about 1/3 inch thick and 2 inches across.

Bake for about 10 minutes, or until the edges are a light caramel color. Remove from the oven and transfer the cookies to racks to cool.

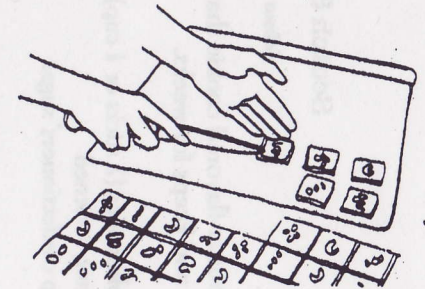
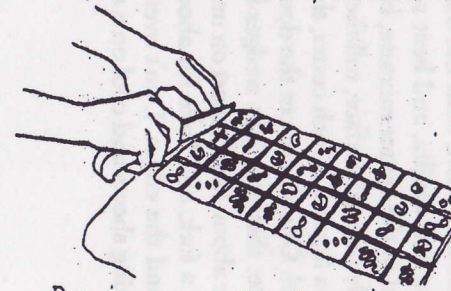
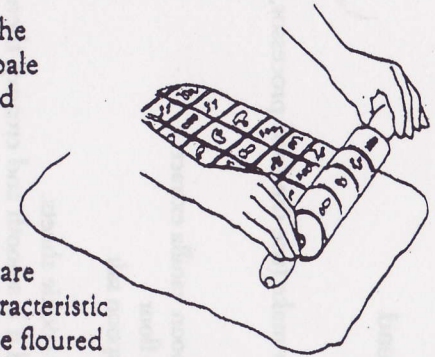
(about 60 cookies)

Another dry, hard German cookie, slightly sweet, with a strong anise (licorice) flavor; very neat and tailored looking. The design in the center can be made with a special Springerle rolling pin or pressed in with individual wooden stamps available in cookware shops. Make several weeks ahead of time so the flavor can mellow.

3 eggs	extract, or 1/2 teaspoon oil of anise
3 cups confectioners' sugar	
1 tablespoon grated lemon rind (yellow part, or zest, only)	3 cups flour
1 teaspoon anise flavoring or	1 tablespoon aniseed

Beat the eggs, then slowly add the sugar and continue beating until pale and thick. Add the lemon rind and anise flavor, then slowly add the flour, mixing only until blended. The dough will be quite light.

Turn out onto a floured surface, then push, pat, and roll into a square about 3/8 inch thick. Make the characteristic design in the dough with either the floured Springerle rolling pin or individual stamps; press the mold hard so you get a definite print. With a sharp knife, trim the edges so they are even all the way around. Then cut into squares indicated by the mold.



Butter some cookie sheets, sprinkle them with the aniseed, and place the cookies on them, leaving 1/2 inch between cookies. Let stand overnight at room temperature, uncovered, to dry out.

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Bake for about 15 minutes; the tops should be white or pale ivory-colored, and the bottoms lightly browned—lift a few up to see. Remove from the oven and transfer to racks to cool. Store in airtight containers for several weeks or longer to allow the cookies to mellow before using.