

## Project: Almond Sugar Cutout Cookies

**Prep:** 35 minutes **Chill:** 2 hours  
**Bake:** 9 minutes per batch at 350° F

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- ½ cup finely ground blanched almonds
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Royal Icing (optional)
- Black paste food coloring (optional)

1. In a large mixing bowl beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Beat in eggs, milk, vanilla, and almond extract until combined. Beat in ground almonds. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Using a wooden spoon, stir in any remaining flour. Divide dough in half. Cover and chill about 2 hours or until dough is easy to handle.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of the dough at a time until ⅛ to ¼ inch thick. Using a 3-inch round cookie cutter, cut out dough. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.
3. Bake about 9 minutes or until edges are firm and bottoms are very light brown. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool. If desired, glaze cookies with Royal Icing; let stand until set. If desired, tint the remaining

icing using black food coloring and pipe on cookies in paw-print designs; let stand until set.

Makes 44 cookies.

### Royal Icing

In a large mixing bowl stir together one 16-ounce package (about 4 cups) powdered sugar, 3 tablespoons meringue powder,\* and ½ teaspoon cream of tartar. Add ½ cup warm water and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed until combined. Beat on high speed for 7 to 10 minutes or until mixture is very stiff. Stir in additional warm water, about 1 teaspoon at a time, until icing reaches glazing consistency. If not using immediately, cover bowl with a damp paper towel and then with plastic wrap; chill for up to 48 hours. Makes about 3 cups.

**\*TIP:** Look for meringue powder in the cake decorating aisle of hobby and craft stores.

**\*\*TIP:** To use Royal Icing as a glaze, stir in additional warm water, about ½ teaspoon at a time, until icing reaches a thin spreading consistency.

**To Store:** Layer cookies between sheets of waxed paper in an airtight container; cover. Store at room temperature for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

**Nutrition Facts (per cookie):**  
 105 cal., 5 g total fat (3 g sat. fat),  
 20 mg chol., 73 mg sodium,  
 14 g carb., 0 g fiber, 7 g sugar,  
 1 g pro.

**Daily Values:** 3% vit. A, 0% vit. C,  
 1% calcium, 3% iron