

Cake

Troubleshooting Guide



CAKES HELPFUL HINTS

- Over greased cake pans cause the cake edges to shrink.
- Higher the bake heat, the higher the peak.
- Cooler bake temperature for flatter cakes.

COARSE, OPEN GRAIN

POSSIBLE CAUSES



Oven Temperature Too Low

Use correct temperature: 370°F-380°F (187°C-193°C).

Overmixed

Mix less in first stage.

Batter Temperature Too High

Use ingredients at correct temperature: 68°F-72°F (20°C-22°C).

Undermixed

Mix less in first stage.

Old Batter

Do not let batter stand for more than 20 minutes.

Excess Sugar or Leavening

Decrease amounts.

Poor Grade of Shortening

Use a quality high-ratio cake shortening.

Wrong Type of Flour or Leavening

Use correct type of flour or leavening (double acting).

Batter Too Stiff

Use more liquid.

Creaming At High Speed

Use slower speed.

SHRINKING

POSSIBLE CAUSES



Oven Temperature Too High or Low

Use correct temperature: 370°F-380°F (187°C-193°C).

Overmixed

Mix less.

Overbaked

Bake properly with solid, steady heat.

Pan Overgreased

Use less grease.

Flour Too Strong

Use all-purpose or cake flour.

Not Enough Batter in Pans

Increase amount.

Lean Formula

Use more sugar or shortening.

Too Much Liquid in Batter

Decrease liquid.

Wrong Type of Shortening

Use a quality cake shortening.

Excess Leavening

Decrease amount.



Cake Troubleshooting Guide



THICK, TOUGH CRUST



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Oven Temperature Too High

Bake at lower temperature.

Baked Too Long in Cool Oven

Bake at higher temperature.

Excessive Amount of Sugar in Dough

Reduce sugar content.

Flour Too Weak or Too Strong

Use a quality cake flour.

Overbaked

Bake properly with solid, steady heat.

Pan is Extra Deep

Use shallower pans.

Insufficient Sugar or Shortening

Increase amount.

Excessive Egg Content

Decrease amount.

Batter Overmixed

Decrease mixing time.

Eggs Overbeaten

Beat less.

CRUST CRACKS ON TOP



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Oven Temperature Too High

Bake at lower temperature.

Stiff Batter

Use more liquid.

Too Much Bottom Heat

Double-pan the cakes.

Batter Overmixed

Decrease mixing time.

Insufficient Sugar, Shortening or Leavening

Increase amount.

Flour Too Strong

Use a quality cake flour.

Too Much Top Heat

Decrease top heat.

TIGHT CLOSE GRAIN



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Too Much Water

Decrease liquid.

Stiff Batter

Use more liquid.

Insufficient Leavening

Increase amount.

Wrong Type of Flour or Leavening

Use cake flour or double acting leavening.

Too Much Invert Syrup

Decrease amount.

Insufficient Sugar or Shortening (Lean Formula)

Increase amount.

Batter Too Warm

Keep batter at proper temperature: 68°F-72°F (20°C-22°C).

STICKY CRUST



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Excessive Sugar

Decrease sugar.

Too Much Steam in Oven

Open damper slightly.

Flour Too Weak

Use a quality cake flour.

Excessive Shortening

Decrease amount.

Lack of Sugar on Cooling Cloths

Sprinkle a little granulated sugar on cloths.

Improper Cooling

Cool appropriately.

CAKE PEAKS IN OVEN



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Oven Temperature Too High

Bake at lower temperature.

Stiff Batter

Use more liquid.

Overmixed

Decrease mixing time.

Not Enough Batter in Pans

Scale cakes heavier.

Egg Content Too High

Decrease eggs.

Lean Formula

Increase sugar and shortening.

Flour Too Strong

Use a quality cake flour.

CAKE TOO TENDER



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Too Much Oil/Shortening

Decrease amount.

Undermixed

Mix longer.

Not Enough Eggs

Increase amount.

Too Much Sugar or Leavening

Decrease amount.

Flour Too Weak

Use a quality cake flour.

DRY CRUMBLY CAKE



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Overbaked

Bake properly with solid, steady heat.

Use of Lean Formula

Use richer formula.

Flour Too Strong or Weak

Use a quality cake flour.

Batter Stiff

Use more liquid.

Excess Sugar, Shortening or Leavening

Decrease amount.

Cold Oven

Bake at higher temperature.

Improper Mixing

Mix properly.

Egg Content Too High

Decrease eggs.

Sugar Too Coarse

Use finer granulation.

Sugar and Shortening Overcreamed

Cream sugar and shortening properly.

Mix is Curdled

Add eggs and liquid gradually.

Shortening is Cold

Use shortening at 70°F- 75°F (20°C-24°C).

Eggs Not Thawed Out

Use eggs at 64°F-68°F (18°C-20°C).

Wrong Type of Shortening

Use a quality cake shortening.

Old Batter

Do not let batter stand for more than 20 minutes.

CAKE FALLS IN CENTER



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Oven Temperature Too Low

Bake at higher temperature.

Cake Bumped During Baking

Handle cakes carefully.

Altitude

If at high altitude, reduce leavening.

Excess Sugar, Shortening or Leavening

Decrease amount.

Overcreaming

Cream less.

Insufficient Eggs

Increase amount.

Flour Too Weak

Use a quality cake flour.

Wrong Type of Shortening

Use a quality cake shortening.

TUNNELS AND HOLES



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Undermixed or Overmixed

Mix properly.

Wrong Type of Shortening

Use a quality cake shortening.

Improper Blending of Leavening

Blend leavening thoroughly with flour.

Incorrect Creaming Temperature

Batter temperature should be 68°F-72°F (20°C-22°C).

Flour Too Strong

Use a quality cake flour.

Batter Too Stiff

Use more liquid.

Insufficient Sugar

Increase amount.

Egg Content Too High

Decrease amount.

Mixing At High Speed

Use lower speed.

Too Much Sugar

Decrease amount.

Batter Curdled

Add eggs and liquid gradually.

Eggs Too Cold

Use eggs at 64°F-68°F (18°C-20°C).

LOW VOLUME



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Undermixed or Overmixed

Mix properly.

Oven Temperature Too High

Use correct temperature: 370°F-380°F (187°C-193°C).

Batter Temperature Too High

Use mix at 68°F-72°F (20°C-22°C).

Insufficient Leavening

Increase amount.

Mix Too Stiff

Use more liquid.

Batter Too Soft

Decrease liquid.

Wrong Type of Shortening

Use a quality cake shortening.

Inferior Eggs

Use quality eggs.

Not Enough Dough in Pans

Scale cakes heavier.

Eggs Too Cold

Use eggs at 64°F-68°F (18°C-20°C).

Old Leavening

Use fresh leavening.

Flour Too Strong

Use a quality cake flour.

CUPPING



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Stiff Batter

Use more liquid.

Air Trapped Under Liner

Place liner in pan firmly.

Too Much Bottom Heat

Decrease bottom heat or use double-pan.

Moisture in Pan

Dry pans thoroughly before use.

Pan Overgreased

Grease pans carefully.

Egg Content Too High

Decrease eggs.

UNEVEN CAKE



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Uneven Pan

Use quality, level pans.

Uneven Spreading of Batter

Spread evenly throughout pan.

Uneven Heat in Oven

Check oven burner for defects.

Hot Spots in Oven

Eliminate hot spots, if possible, and check oven burner for defects.

Batter Improperly Mixed

Mix batter properly.

Too Much Bottom Heat

Decrease bottom heat or use double-pan.

Too Much Top Heat

Decrease top heat or cover cakes with paper.

Uneven Distribution of Leavening

Blend leavening thoroughly with flour.

Uneven Distribution of Sugar

Distribute sugar thoroughly.

Slanting Hearth/Shelves

Use level hearth.

WET TEXTURE



POSSIBLE CAUSES

Undermixed

Mix properly.

Use of Lean Formula

Use richer formula.

Flour Too Strong or Weak

Use a quality cake flour.

Batter is Stiff

Use more liquid.

Too Much Sugar

Decrease amount.

Excess Shortening or Leavening

Decrease amount.

Cold Oven

Bake at higher temperature.

Egg Content Too High

Decrease eggs; increase milk and leavening.

Sugar Too Coarse

Use finer granulation.

Too Much Acid in Dough

Decrease acid content of batter.

Sugar and Shortening Overcreamed

Cream properly.

Mix is Curdled

Add eggs and liquid gradually.

Shortening Too Cold

Use shortening at 70°F-75°F (20°C-24°C).

Get more tips at www.ardentmills.ca

Still having problems? Call our Technical Service team at **1-800-361-6259**