

# Shannon Wallis' Gingerbread Recipe

Passed along from Martha Dyner

5 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tsp. salt  
2 tsp. ground ginger  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 tsp. ground nutmeg  
1 tsp. ground cloves  
1 cup shortening  
1 cup sugar  
1 ¼ cup molasses  
2 eggs, beaten

In a large mixing bowl, stir together flour, salt and spices. In a separate bowl, combine sugar, molasses and beaten eggs. In large saucepan, melt shortening on stove over low heat. When shortening is half melted, remove from heat and continue to stir until completely melted. Add molasses mixture to shortening, mixing well and quickly (to prevent eggs from cooking). Add molasses mixture to flour mixture. Mix well. Dough will be soft. Use right away or cover and refrigerate for later. If you refrigerate, remove dough from refrigerator and let sit until room temperature (about an hour). Preheat oven to 350°.

Roll dough between two sheets of parchment. You can also roll my dough directly on baking sheets, dusted with a bit of flour. Working with a handful of dough, roll it out to about 1/8" thickness. Place house pattern pieces on dough (oiling pattern pieces or dusting them with flour prevents them from sticking to the dough) and trace around them with a knife, including windows and doors. Try to set edges of pieces next to each other to save as much space on the dough as possible. Don't remove all of the extra dough around the piece. Instead, leave about a half inch of dough outside your pattern tracings. Also, keep your windows and doors in place. This will keep the building pieces from spreading out.

For best results, refrigerate cut dough on cookie sheets until sheet is cool. Then place sheet in oven for about 10 – 15 minutes. It is important to cook the pieces thoroughly so that they will dry hard; that is essential particularly for larger pieces, so add time to the baking if necessary.

When pieces are done, remove from oven and quickly cut around all of the lines, cutting away the excess, and remove dough from inside windows and doors (save the door pieces to construct the door, and cut the window pieces in half for shutters if you wish). Allow the pieces to cool at least overnight before assembling (or place in fridge for a bit). They should be completely dry and hard before you work with them.

For frosting, I either use King Arthur Flour's Meringue Powder, following their Royal Icing recipe on the back, or I use KAF's Royal Icing mix.

Have fun!