

Making 1-2-3-4 Cake

Ingredients

1 cup butter

2 cups sugar

3 cups flour

4 eggs

2-3 pinches (about $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon) each of ground cloves, cinnamon and nutmeg

- Cream softened butter and sugar in a large bowl
- Mix flour and spices in another bowl
- Beat eggs until frothy
- Beat the eggs and flour in turns into the creamed butter and sugar (add water or subtract flour if the batter gets too stiff)
- Bake in a greased and floured pan at 350 degrees until a toothpick comes out clean (1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours depending on pan size)

During Taking Tea we measure with a teacup and bake in a round cake pan larger than a modern layer cake pan. I find when making the recipe with standard measures, but the same pan, that it results in more batter and a longer baking time of 1.5 hours (you might try dividing the batter into two cake pans for better results). Sometimes it burns around the edges before the center is done.

I do not know where the recipe originally came from. It was probably drawn from the recipe for cup cake in Lydia Marie Child's 1833 *American Frugal Housewife*: "Cup cake is about as good as pound cake, and is cheaper. One cup of butter, two cups of sugar, three cups of flour, and four eggs, well beat together, and baked in pans or cups. Bake twenty minutes, and no more."