

BANANAS HANDOUT

Baker's Dough Ornaments

Recipe:

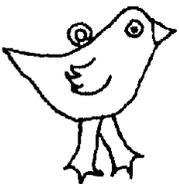
Mix 2 cups of flour and 1 cup of salt together; add 1 cup water, a little at a time. Knead 7-10 minutes until dough is smooth. If dough is still a little sticky, add more flour during kneading process. Store in a plastic bag until used.

Hints:

- Don't use self-rising flour. (Unless you want puffy ornaments!)
- Dough can be stored in the refrigerator a few days but it is easiest to work with if you make it just before use.
- Make your ornaments right on a cookie sheet — they are not easily moved without damage. You may want to line cookie sheet with aluminum foil.
- If you use a mold, wipe inner surfaces with a light coat of cooking oil before pressing in the dough.
- To join two pieces of dough together, moisten both edges with tap water and press together.

Shaping:

1. **Cookie cutter ornaments:** Roll out dough on floured surface to about 1/4" thickness and cut out shapes. Transfer to cookie sheet and add trim with more dough. You can also cut out a shape from cardboard and cut around it if you don't have cookie cutters of the shape you want.



2. **Molds:** Candy and cookie molds make nice ornaments. Oil inside of mold and press dough in firmly. Oil should help prevent sticking. Unmold on cookie sheet.

3. **Free-form ornaments:** Begin with basic shape — i.e. head for a Santa's face ornament; add trim — in Santa's case this would be the hat, eyes, eyebrows, mustache, beard (use garlic press), etc. Use water very sparingly in connecting trim. Usually parts can be connected by pinching firmly. If pieces don't join easily then dough is probably too dry. For Christmas tree ornaments, keep objects small enough to be hung without weighing down tree branches.

4. **Tools to use in shaping:** Tooth picks, clay tools, forks, skewers, nails, garlic press — just about anything! Check your kitchen utensils and your children's toys for interesting baker's dough tools.

CAUTION: Always supervise children working with sharp or pointed objects. And, be sure children understand that baker's dough is not for tasting! Because the dough looks a lot like cookie dough, little ones may be tempted to nibble a bit.



Pre-Colored Ornaments:

Add a little cornstarch in place of flour when you use this process. It helps the dough maintain color while baking. You can use either food coloring or tube water color paints to dye the dough. Mix up several colors for more fun. Knead the color into the dough until it is evenly mixed. Dye the colors slightly deeper than you want the finished product because the color will fade some when baked. These ornaments are "finished" when they come out of the oven, requiring only a coat of shellac to preserve. Pre-coloring ornaments is a good technique to use with very young children (who may find painting frustrating).

To make hanging ornaments, make a hole in the top of ornaments before baking!

Baking:

Baking time and temperature are determined by the thickness of the finished object. Thin objects bake at 150-200°F; thicker objects at 250-350°F. Watch thin objects carefully. If they start browning too fast, reduce oven temperature.

Hints:

- Bake as soon as possible after ornaments are shaped. This will reduce puffing up of objects. If objects start to puff, prick with a pin and reduce temperature.

- You can baste objects with a whole beaten egg during the baking process for an easy, shiny finish. Be sure to varnish when cool.
- Bake objects until they are desired shade of brown and thoroughly hard.
- If large, flat ornaments start to curl while baking, weigh down edges with metal tool after surface has cooked long enough to support the weight without leaving indentations.



Microwave Version:

You can “bake” the dough in a microwave oven as well. Use the basic recipe to prepare dough. Place ornaments on wax paper on a piece of cardboard. Place in the microwave oven. Heat each piece about 3-4 minutes on medium-low. Turn over once during heating if design allows. If a piece starts to bubble, stop the microwave and pierce the bubble with a pin. If a piece starts to curl, stop the microwave and weigh down the curling spot with a piece of microwave-safe glass for 30 seconds. Continue heating until dough hardens.

Finishing:

Wait until objects have completely cooled off before painting or shellacking. You can finish in a variety of ways — using water colors, acrylics, enamels and spray paint (but not tempera which runs when shellacked.) Water colors can be applied in a wash or opaquely. Ornaments can also be sprinkled with glitter or simply left plain. However, if you want ornaments to last, you must shellac — use several coats and cover all sides of ornament.

Hints:

- Buy cheap tiny brushes if you plan to paint in much detail on ornaments.
- Paint one color on ornament and allow it to dry before using another color to prevent smudging. This requires some patience from children!

- Wax paper makes a good surface to use for shellacking. Allow one side to dry before shellacking the opposite side. Shellac sides 6-12 hours apart to be safe. If shellac gets marred just re-shellac.
- You can also seal with lacquer, varnish or acrylic sealer.
- Fishing line, ribbon or yarn can be threaded through hole in ornament for hanging on the tree.



Storing:

Store in a boxes in layers of wax paper. Keep boxes in a dry area. Moisture and humidity will soften even shellacked objects. If objects get dull or begin to show cracking, they can be re-shellacked.

NOTE: Morton Salt Company publishes a booklet from which some of the information above was taken. You can obtain a copy by sending \$1 to “**Morton’s Dough-It Yourself Handbook Rises Again,**” Morton Salt Company, 123 North Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606. Morton Salt also provides a free pamphlet with salt dough recipes and basic projects. Call (312) 807-2693 to request the free pamphlet.

Water Colors, clay tools and inexpensive brushes can be obtained at many art supply stores, including the following:

Amsterdam Art
1013 University Ave.
Berkeley, 649-4800

The Art Store
5301 Broadway Ave.
Oakland, 658-2787

