



Homemade Crackers Redux

You have read how I often - OK, usually - change recipes before I try to make a particular item and often afterwards when I do a taste test and decide it needs more or less of something. So with humility I am publishing my second rendition of [crackers](#), first published in January of 2012. I made those crackers many times before publishing my original version of the whole grain crunchy crackers.

Yet today, after baking countless batches, I streamlined my cracker technique, ingredients and method and in my humble opinion (or as the kids say, "IMHO") they come out crisper and tastier. The chia seeds are a catchy ingredient, are they not? There is a lot less cleanup, or in Yiddish "Potchkey." This is how we love them: dark brown and crispy. I continue to make these at least weekly if not more often. And credit goes to my daughter Rachel who bakes these often for her toddlers and who came up with the cutting-on-the-cookie sheet timesaver!

Whole Grain Crackers

Makes ~8 dozen

Ingredients:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup 100% whole wheat flour (I use WHITE whole wheat flour for breads – King Arthur brand) plus extra to roll the crackers
- Heaping $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole white sesame seeds (do not grind them)
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- Heaping $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of either sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds (OR a combo of both)
- 2 Tbsp flax seeds
- 1 Tbsp chia seeds
- 5 ounces room temperature water-measure in a liquid measuring cup.
- 2 Tbsp pure maple syrup o
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- Coarse salt flakes and about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra sesame seeds to top the crackers

Instructions:

Combine whole wheat flour, sesame seeds and salt in a medium bowl.

Place sunflower seeds and/or pumpkin seeds, flax seeds and chia seeds in a small coffee grinder (I have a Krups bean grinder from 40 years ago) and pulse 6 times or until it is ground finely. Add to the flour mixture.

Combine water, syrup and oil together, then add into the flour mixture with a spatula. Use your hands to knead briefly and to form a smooth ball in the bowl. Be sure all the flour etc is incorporated. Cover the bowl with a dish towel and leave it for about 20 minutes or up to 12 hours. Do not refrigerate.

Preheat oven (see temperatures below).

I coat half of the dough in a little over two tablespoons of sesame seeds on each side, then add a tiny bit of whole wheat flour to the board if it sticks. I press it into a rectangle with my hands then roll it out on the wood board to 16" x 11" (yes, I measured) and plop it on top of the parchment lined cookie sheet. I then sprinkle with sea salt, roll with a rolling pin lightly to press it in and cut it into squares right on the parchment lined sheet. Cut them all the way through with the pizza cutter but do not separate the pieces (see photo). I just make two cookie sheet's worth, and both are totally filled. In fact, as you will see, I had to trim one of the rectangles and put the shards on the other tray. The ever brilliant Rachel came up with this: substitute brown sugar for maple syrup – another friend of mine uses honey and all sunflower seeds.

I bake for 25-30 minutes at 330 in my convection oven and don't turn the pans. (If you are using a regular oven, bake at 350 for at least 26 minutes, switching the position of the cookie sheets halfway through. Watch carefully so they are very brown, as much as you like. We love them a pinch less than burned--in other words, very dark brown. Immediately put the parchment with the crackers on cooling racks when you take them out of the oven. (The sheet would continue to cook them.) Cool completely (this only takes about 15 minutes tops) and they break apart easily along the pizza cutter lines. This is simple to do. Remember not to store sealed - I keep mine in an open jar on the counter (more accurately, in a small dish or we'd eat the entire thing in a day). I put out a few at a time. They store well in a paper sack as well.