

Should You Make Your Own Sweet Treats?

Cookie Dough Cost Comparison

FAMILY / FOOD / FRUGAL

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One of the biggest expenses in our house is food. We try to keep our food budget below \$100 per week, including any meals out, for all four of us. Our biggest expense right now is baby formula which will come to an end in a few short weeks! At that point, we may be able to bring down our weekly food bill to our previous \$75 per week, as the boys are young yet and don't eat a ton of food!

I always try to focus on frugal staples or healthy foods to keep in the house. I don't think eating healthy has to be expensive, as buying produce in season is the best bargain. The biggest thing I have found over the years of learning to cook and bake is how much more expensive prepared foods can be, and less healthy in the process.



Oftentimes, it's easier to pick up a bag of cookies, but they come loaded with a bunch of extras you may not be interested in adding to your body. While I'm not one who shops completely organic and from time to time I grab that bag of Oreos (mostly for Mr. FM), I try to save a few dollars, spend time with the kids, and make wholesome foods (or treats!) when we can.

Recently, Monkey and I took to making chocolate chip cookie dough together when we heard it was National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day. I'm sure some company came up with that holiday to get more people to buy cookies!

We used Rosanna Pansino's recipe from her [Nerdy Nummies](#) Cookbook. It seemed pretty similar to an old Betty Crocker recipe I've used many times before. Monkey loves Ro's videos and even met her to get this cookbook signed!

Mr. FM is always amazed at how I can whip up a fresh batch of cookies on a whim. He grew up with freshly baked cookies only on one big day around the holidays when they'd make dozens

upon dozens to take to family gatherings. So, he says he never experienced small batch-when you're in the mood for them-cookie baking.

I enjoy teaching Monkey how to use kitchen tools, though it does get messier than I'd like at times. I also like for him to learn how food is made and understand it just doesn't appear on a shelf at the store.

Cooking and baking together gives us an activity to learn from and a sweet result at the end. We started cooking with him in the kitchen in his highchair over 3 years ago and now he can measure ingredients and crack the eggs for us!

Let's get down to the business- is it even worth making your own cookies these days?

Cost Comparison of Homemade Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough vs. Store Bought Dough

I found a nifty website that allows you to put in all of your ingredients to find out the total cost of the recipe you're making: [Pricing Baked Goods](#). I put in all of Ro's ingredients with the prices of my local Wegmans, where I shop more often than not.

Nerdy Nummies Chocolate Chip Cookies

Amount	Ingredient	Cost in recipe
2 cups	unbleached white flour	\$0.21
¾ cup	granulated white sugar	\$0.19
¾ cup	brown sugar	\$0.36
1 tsp	table salt	\$0.01
1 tsp	baking soda	\$0.01
2	egg	\$0.11
12 ozs	milk chocolate chips	\$1.66
1 cup	salted butter	\$1.60
1 tsp	vanilla extract	\$0.33
	recipe total:	\$4.48

The cost per cookie homemade is **\$4.48 for the batch**, which I made 48 cookies for a cost of **\$0.09 per cookie**.

To buy similar cookie dough from my local Wegmans would be **\$2.49 for a 16 oz. package**, which makes about 24 cookies according to their serving size for a cost of **\$0.10 per cookie**.

All other brands of cookie dough were much more expensive. If you're comparing to Nestle Toll House or Pillsbury the cost per cookie jumps over store brand.

Wegmans' package also comes with a long list of ingredients as well as warnings:

Ingredients

Enriched Bleached Flour (Wheat Flour, Niacin, Iron, Thiamin Mononitrate [Vitamin B1], Riboflavin [Vitamin B2], Folic Acid), Sugar, Chocolate Chips (Sugar, Chocolate Liquor,

Cocoa Butter, Dextrose, Soy Lecithin, Milk Fat, Artificial Flavor), Vegetable Oil ([Palm, Soybean and/or Cottonseed Oils], Citric Acid [Preservative]), Water, Eggs. Contains 2% or Less of Each of the Following: Skim Milk, Corn Syrup Solids, Molasses, Salt, Baking Soda, Natural and Artificial Flavors, Soy Flour.

Warnings

Allergens: Contains eggs, milk, soy and wheat. Made on equipment that also makes products containing pecans, walnuts, peanuts and macadamia nuts.

I was surprised to see that my **homemade cookies were less expensive**, as I thought they might turn out to be pricier. I also can't directly compare the fresh cookies to store bought baked and factory produced which would have different ingredients and definitely taste.

What I can tell you is that it's so easy to put together this recipe and then refrigerate or freeze the dough for later use when you need it. I make only the cookies we need for moment (12 at a time) and then I wrap the dough in wax paper and cling wrap to keep it fresh while chilled or frozen.

Overall, I have yet to come across many recipes that cost more to cook at home than to purchase when you compare ingredients that are similar. Sure, I bet a bag of Chips Ahoy cookies might be less expensive per cookie, but they wouldn't come with the same ingredients, flavor, or fun when making them yourself.

Plus, I love going somewhere with my homemade dishes and hear everyone enjoying the food. We brought these cookies to a family party and they disappeared in minutes with all the little kiddos running to grab one. I wouldn't have felt as joyful if I brought a bag of cookies to share.

What does your food budget look like? Could you make some items you buy pre-made at home to save more?