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Description

Cream cheese pecan cookies are a delicious homemade treat that combines the rich flavor of butter, the subtle tang of cream cheese, and the warm, nutty crunch of pecans. These cookies have tender centers, lightly golden edges, and a delicate texture that makes them perfect for enjoying with coffee, tea, or a glass of milk.

Cream cheese adds moisture and a soft, rich consistency, while chopped pecans provide a satisfying crunch in every bite. Whether you are preparing holiday cookies, filling a dessert platter, or simply baking something special for your family, these cookies are easy to make and wonderfully comforting.

Can These Cream Cheese Pecan Cookies Support Weight Loss Goals?

Cream cheese pecan cookies can fit into a balanced eating routine when enjoyed in moderate portions. Pecans provide unsaturated fats, some fiber, and minerals, while cream cheese and eggs contribute small amounts of protein.

However, butter, cream cheese, and sugar also make these cookies relatively energy-dense. For a portion-conscious option, make smaller cookies, measure the ingredients carefully, and enjoy one or two as part of your overall eating pattern. No single dessert determines weight-management results.

Do These Cookies Fit a High-Protein Lifestyle?

Traditional cream cheese pecan cookies are primarily a source of carbohydrates and fats rather than protein. Cream cheese, eggs, and pecans provide some protein, but the amount per cookie is generally modest.

To make the recipe more suitable for a lower-carb eating style, you can experiment with almond flour and a suitable sugar substitute, although the texture will differ from traditional cookies. If you want a higher-protein snack, enjoy a cookie alongside plain Greek yogurt or another protein-rich food.

My Personal Experience

- Soft and tender centers: Cream cheese gives these cookies a delicate texture that feels rich without being overly heavy. The centers stay pleasantly soft when the cookies are not overbaked.
- Delicious pecan crunch: Chopped pecans add a buttery, nutty flavor that pairs beautifully with the cream cheese dough. Lightly toasting the nuts beforehand can make their flavor even more pronounced.
- A balanced sweet flavor: The mild tang of cream cheese complements the sweetness of the cookie dough. A touch of vanilla enhances the overall flavor.
- Perfect for sharing: These cookies are easy to arrange on a platter for gatherings, celebrations, or afternoon tea. Their nutty flavor makes them especially appealing during the holiday season.

Perfect For

- Homemade cookie recipes
- Pecan dessert lovers
- Holiday cookie platters
- Christmas baking
- Afternoon tea and coffee
- Family gatherings
- Homemade edible gifts
- Bake sales and potlucks
- Buttery dessert collections
- Weekend baking projects

Why You'll Love This Recipe

- Rich cream cheese flavor: Cream cheese adds a subtle tang and a soft, tender texture that distinguishes these cookies from ordinary butter cookies.
- Crunchy pecans in every bite: Chopped pecans create a pleasant contrast with the delicate cookie crumb.
- Simple baking ingredients: The recipe uses familiar pantry staples and straightforward preparation steps.
- Great make-ahead option: The dough can be chilled before baking, making it easier to prepare cookies around a busy schedule.
- Easy to customize: Add cinnamon, orange zest, or a small amount of maple extract for a different flavor.
- Ideal for gifting: Once cooled, the cookies can be packed in a food-safe container for sharing with friends and family.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Using overly soft butter: Butter that is melted rather than softened can make the dough greasy and cause the cookies to spread too much.
2. Skipping the chilling step: Cream cheese dough can be soft. Chilling helps the cookies hold their shape during baking.
3. Adding too many pecans: Excessive nuts can make the dough difficult to shape and cause the cookies to break apart. Measure the pecans before mixing.
4. Overmixing after adding flour: Excessive mixing can develop the flour's gluten and make the cookies tougher. Mix just until combined.

5. Overbaking the cookies: These cookies should be lightly golden around the edges rather than deeply browned. They will continue to firm up as they cool.
6. Moving cookies too soon: Freshly baked cookies are delicate. Let them rest on the baking sheet for several minutes before transferring them to a cooling rack.

Required Equipment

- Large mixing bowl: Provides space to cream the butter, cream cheese, and sugar.
- Electric hand mixer or stand mixer: Helps create a smooth, evenly combined dough.
- Measuring cups and spoons or kitchen scale: Improve ingredient accuracy and cookie consistency.
- Rubber spatula: Scrapes the bowl and folds in the chopped pecans.
- Baking sheets: Provide a flat surface for even baking.
- Parchment paper: Helps prevent sticking and makes cleanup easier.
- Cookie scoop or tablespoon: Creates evenly sized cookies that bake at a similar rate.
- Cooling rack: Allows air to circulate so the cookies cool without becoming soggy underneath.

Storage Instructions

- Room temperature: Store completely cooled cookies in an airtight container for up to 2 days in a cool environment.
- Refrigerator: Because these cookies contain cream cheese, refrigerate them in an airtight container for up to 5 days for best quality.
- Freezer: Freeze baked cookies in a freezer-safe container for up to 2-3 months for best quality.
- Freezing the dough: Shape the dough into portions and freeze them on a tray. Once firm, transfer them to a freezer-safe bag or container.
- Thawing: Thaw baked cookies in the refrigerator or at room temperature for a short period before serving.
- Prevent sticking: Separate layers with parchment paper when stacking cookies in a storage container.

Recipe Details

- Prep time: 15 minutes
- Chilling time: 30 minutes
- Cook time: 10-13 minutes per batch

- Total time: Approximately 55–70 minutes, depending on the number of batches
- Yield: 24 cookies
- Difficulty: Easy
- Cuisine: American-inspired
- Meal type: Dessert or sweet snack
- Best for: Holidays, parties, and everyday treats

Short Description

These cream cheese pecan cookies are soft, buttery, and filled with chopped pecans. Cream cheese adds a delicate tang and tender crumb, making these homemade cookies a delicious choice for holidays, afternoon treats, and sharing with family and friends.

Ingredients

- ½ cup (113 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 4 ounces (113 g) full-fat cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup (150 g) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups (250 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup (85 g) chopped pecans
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon, optional

Optional Topping

- 2 tablespoons finely chopped pecans
- A light dusting of powdered sugar, optional

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Prepare the oven: Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Cream the butter and cream cheese: In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened butter and cream cheese until smooth and creamy.
3. Add the sugar: Beat in the granulated sugar until the mixture looks light and well

combined.

4. Mix in the egg and vanilla: Add the egg and vanilla extract. Beat until incorporated, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed.
5. Combine the dry ingredients: In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and optional cinnamon.
6. Make the dough: Gradually add the dry ingredients to the cream cheese mixture. Mix on low speed just until a soft dough forms.
7. Fold in the pecans: Use a spatula to fold in the chopped pecans until evenly distributed.
8. Chill the dough: Cover the bowl and refrigerate for approximately 30 minutes. This makes the dough easier to handle and helps limit spreading.
9. Shape the cookies: Scoop about 1 tablespoon of dough per cookie and roll gently into balls. Place them on the prepared baking sheets, leaving about 2 inches between each cookie. Press a few extra chopped pecans on top if desired.
10. Bake: Bake for 10–13 minutes, or until the edges are lightly golden and the centers appear set. Avoid waiting for the entire cookie to become deeply browned.
11. Cool briefly: Leave the cookies on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring them to a cooling rack.
12. Finish and serve: Allow the cookies to cool completely. Add a light dusting of powdered sugar if desired, then serve.

Approximate Nutrition Information

Estimated per cookie, assuming the recipe makes 24 cookies and excluding optional toppings.

Nutrient	Approximate amount
Calories	135–155
Total fat	8–10 g
Saturated fat	3.5–4.5 g
Cholesterol	15–25 mg
Sodium	55–90 mg
Potassium	35–60 mg
Total carbohydrates	13–16 g
Fiber	0.5–1 g

Net carbohydrates	12-15 g
Sugars	6-8 g
Protein	2-3 g
Calcium	10-20 mg

Nutrition values are estimates and vary with ingredient brands, cookie size, and any optional toppings.

Helpful Notes

- Use full-fat block cream cheese for a rich texture; whipped cream cheese may contain more air and moisture.
- Make sure the butter and cream cheese are softened but not melted so they combine smoothly.
- Measure flour carefully. Too much flour can make the cookies dry and crumbly.
- For a deeper nutty flavor, toast the chopped pecans in a dry skillet for a few minutes, then cool completely before adding them to the dough.
- If the dough feels very sticky after mixing, refrigerate it before adding extra flour.
- For a slightly festive flavor, add a small pinch of cinnamon or a little orange zest.
- Let the cookies cool completely before storing them to prevent condensation inside the container.
- If using frozen dough portions, allow for a little extra baking time and check that the centers are set.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do cream cheese pecan cookies need to be refrigerated?

Yes. Because the dough contains cream cheese and egg, refrigerate the baked cookies in an airtight container after they have cooled. They are best enjoyed within about 5 days.

2. Why did my cream cheese pecan cookies spread too much?

The butter or cream cheese may have been too warm, or the dough may not have been chilled sufficiently. Measure the flour accurately and refrigerate the dough before baking.

3. Can I use walnuts instead of pecans?

Yes. Chopped walnuts work well and provide a similar crunch, although their flavor is slightly more earthy and less buttery than pecans.

4. Can I prepare the cookie dough ahead of time?

Yes. Cover the dough and refrigerate it for up to 24 hours. Let it soften slightly if it becomes too firm to scoop, then bake as directed.

5. Can I freeze cream cheese pecan cookies?

Yes. Freeze the completely cooled cookies in an airtight freezer-safe container for up to 2-3 months for best quality. Thaw before serving.

6. How can I make these cookies lower in carbohydrates?

You can experiment with almond flour and a suitable sugar substitute, but the recipe will need adjustments because almond flour behaves differently from wheat flour. Use a tested low-carb cookie formula for more predictable results.

7. How do I keep the cookies soft?

Avoid overbaking, measure the flour carefully, and store the cooled cookies in an airtight container. The cream cheese helps maintain a tender texture when the dough is prepared correctly.

8. Can I add chocolate chips to these cookies?

Yes. Add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chocolate chips along with the pecans. This adds sweetness and chocolate flavor, though it will also change the nutritional values.