



Hardtack Pilot Crackers

The traditional staple of early missionaries traveling by ship to new lands went by a variety of names—oyster crackers, pilot biscuits, pilot crackers, saloon pilots, ship bread, ship biscuit, sea bread, hardtack, and hard bread. The bakers of the time made biscuits as hard as possible, as the biscuits would soften and become more palatable with time due to exposure to humidity and other weather elements. Because it is hard and dry, hardtack (when properly stored and transported) will survive rough handling and temperature extremes.

To soften, hardtack was often dunked in tea, coffee, or some other liquid, or cooked into a skillet meal. Because it was baked hard, it would stay intact for years if kept dry. For long voyages, hardtack was baked four times, rather than the more common two, and prepared six months before sailing.

CAL/SERV: 28
YIELDS: 4 DOZEN
PREP TIME: 15MINS
COOK TIME: 30MINS
TOTAL TIME: 45MINS

INGREDIENTS

2 c. all-purpose flour plus more for rolling out the crackers
1 1/2 tsp. brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp. salt
3/4 c. milk
2 tbsp. unsalted butter

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment. Combine the flour, brown sugar, and salt in a medium bowl and mix. Make a well in the center and add the milk and butter. Stir with a fork until a dough forms; turn out on a lightly floured work surface. Roll out to a 1/2- to 3/4-inch thickness and cut into bite-size squares or pieces. Stick a fork down into the top but not through the crackers and place forked side up on the prepared baking sheet. Bake until golden brown and firm, 20 to 30 minutes. Serve with your favorite toppings or dips!

Ship's Bisket - Hard Tack: 18th Century Breads, Part 1. [#townsendsshipsbread](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FyjcJUGuFVg&feature=youtu.be>

How to Make Hardtack at home

Making Hardtack, a pioneer food staple.

[youtu.bhttps://youtu.be/Ztj06oBdkTw](https://youtu.be/Ztj06oBdkTw)