

# VICTORIA SANDWICH

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## Mary Berry's Perfect Victoria Sandwich

The traditional Victoria Sandwich is a baking classic and a tasty teatime treat. This 'all-in-one' method is quick and easy.

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Very Easy

# VICTORIA SANDWICH



## PREPARATION



### Preparation time:

about 30 minutes

### Cooking time:

about 25 minutes

**Makes:** 12 slices

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 large free-range eggs
- 225g/8oz caster sugar, plus a little extra for the finished cake
- 225g/8oz self-raising flour
- 2 level tsp baking powder
- 225g/8oz baking spread or soft butter at room temperature, plus a little extra to grease the tins
- Good-quality strawberry or raspberry jam
- Whipped cream (optional)

## EQUIPMENT

- Scales
- 2 x 20cm or 8in round tins
- Baking parchment or greaseproof paper
- Large mixing bowl
- Electric hand mixer or wooden spoon
- Damp cloth
- Spatula
- Palette knife or flat knife
- Clean tea towel
- Cooling rack

## METHOD

### Stage one

1. Weigh out the ingredients.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan assisted)/ 350F/Gas 4.
3. Grease and line the sandwich tins – use a piece of baking parchment or greaseproof paper to rub a little baking spread or butter around the inside of the tins until the sides and base are lightly coated. Line the bottom of the tins with a circle of baking parchment or greaseproof paper (draw around the base of the tin onto the parchment and cut out a circle to fit).
4. Break the eggs into a large mixing bowl, then add the sugar, flour, baking powder and baking spread. Make sure the teaspoons of baking powder are level, not heaped, as too much baking powder can make the cake sink.
5. Mix everything together until well combined. The easiest way to do this is with an electric hand mixer, but you can use a wooden spoon. Put a damp cloth under your bowl when you're mixing to stop it moving around. Be careful not to over-mix.
6. Divide the mixture evenly between the tins – this doesn't need to be exact, but you can weigh the filled tins if you want to check. Use the spatula to remove all of the mixture from the bowl and gently smooth the surface of the cakes.
7. Place the tins on the middle shelf of the oven and bake for about 25 minutes. Don't be tempted to open the door while they're cooking, but after 20 minutes look through the door to check them.

## TOP TIP

The finished cake mixture should be a soft 'dropping' consistency and should fall off a spoon easily. Be careful not to over-mix - as soon as everything is blended you should stop.

### Stage two

8. The cakes are done when they're pale golden-brown and coming away from the edge of the tins. Press them lightly with a finger to check - they should spring back. Remove them from the oven and set aside to cool in their tins for 5 to 10 minutes. Then run a palette or flat knife around the edge of the tin and carefully tip the cakes out onto a cooling rack. To take your cakes out of the tins without leaving a wire rack mark, put a clean tea towel over the tin, put your hand onto the tea towel and tip the tin upside down. The cake should come out onto your hand and the tea towel - then you can turn it from your hand onto the wire rack.
9. Set aside to cool completely.

### Stage three

10. To assemble the cake, place one cake upside down onto a plate and spread it with plenty of jam. If you want to, you can add whipped cream too.
11. Top with the second cake, top side up. Sprinkle over the caster sugar.



# EQUIPMENT AND INGREDIENTS



## RAISING AGENTS

Baking powder and bicarbonate of soda are chemical raising agents (as opposed to yeast, which is a fungus). They give sponges, scones, muffins and some biscuits their light texture.

Active raising agents give off bubbles of carbon dioxide, which help batter or dough rise. Once they reach a certain temperature in the oven they stop working and the batter or dough sets. It's important not to open the oven door too early during cake baking – the batter needs to set around the air bubbles first or the cake will collapse.

Bicarbonate of soda is alkaline and needs an acid to get it working. Yoghurt, buttermilk and cream of tartar are commonly used to do this. Baking powder is a ready mix of bicarbonate of soda and an acid. It's inactive as long as it's dry and starts working when it comes into contact with liquids.

Once opened, raising agents have a limited shelf life. To test if they're still active, add a teaspoon of raising agent to a small bowl of water – if it doesn't bubble and fizz, throw it away.



## MILK

Milk and cream are added to slacken the consistency, give a lighter result and add protein and fat. Milk is also used in bread to add a richness and a slight sweetness, but it should be scalded (almost boiled) and cooled beforehand to prevent the bread having a heavy crumb.

Full-fat cow's milk is normally used in recipes, but semi-skimmed will work, although the result will be less creamy. Avoid using skimmed milk as it's too watery for baking. Part or all of the milk can be replaced with cream for a richer result – this works particularly well in scones.

Goat's milk, sheep's milk and non-dairy alternatives such as soya or rice milk can be substituted in most recipes, but check the label as some brands may be unsuitable for baking.

Whipped cream is used as a filling or topping. Always use double or whipping cream as these have a higher fat content. Single cream won't whip. When whipping cream, stop as soon as soft peaks form – if you whip for too long, the cream will turn to butter.