

Classic Savory Southern Cornbread

From the Kitchen of [Deep South Dish](#)

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1/4 cup of oil, shortening or bacon fat
1-1/2 cups of all purpose white or yellow cornmeal
3 tablespoons of all purpose flour
1 teaspoon of baking soda
1 teaspoon of baking powder
1 teaspoon of kosher salt
2 cups of buttermilk, *more or less*
1 large egg, *lightly beaten*

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Add the fat to a well seasoned 10-inch cast iron skillet and place the skillet into the oven to melt the fat and heat the skillet.

In a bowl, whisk together the cornmeal, flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Using mitts, carefully remove the skillet from the oven and swirl the hot fat around to coat the entire skillet. Pour the fat from the skillet into the cornmeal mixture; stir. Stir in half of the buttermilk and add the egg; add more buttermilk as needed to make a thick but pourable batter. Depending on the grind of your cornmeal and the type of buttermilk you use, you may not need it all. Fold ingredients and don't beat the batter. Pour the cornmeal mixture into the hot skillet. Carefully place directly into the oven and bake at 450 degrees F for about 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the skillet from the oven, let rest for 5 minutes, then very carefully turn the cornbread out onto a plate or platter to preserve that nice crispy crust!

Cook's Notes: If your cast iron is not well seasoned, your cornbread may stick. Slice out of the skillet if you are unsure. Use a medium grind of cornmeal, not a fine grind. Don't beat the batter or your cornbread will be crumbly. If your baking soda is not fresh, you won't get much of a rise. For insurance I've added a teaspoon of baking powder. I store both my baking soda and my baking powder in the freezer. Can substitute milk for the buttermilk, you'll need less. Can also substitute 2 cups of self-rising cornmeal mix. Eliminate the baking soda and salt if you use a cornbread mix. I prefer White Lily brand, buttermilk, white cornbread mix.

Pan Version: If you prefer to make this in a pan, don't worry. Nobody is gonna take away your Southern card. Just grease an 8 x 8 inch baking dish with vegetable shortening. Mix all of the ingredients together and pour into pan. Bake as above.

Sausage Cheese Cornbread: Add in 1/2 pound of browned breakfast sausage, 1/2 cup of shredded cheddar cheese and 1 can of cream corn. Add 1/4 cup of finely minced onion and 1 teaspoon of finely minced garlic if desired.

Bacon Cornbread: For bacon cornbread, cook several slices of bacon until crisp. Crumble and

add to the batter along with the pan drippings.

Cracklin' Cornbread: Stir about 1/3 cup of finely chopped, fried pork cracklings into the batter before baking.

For Corn Sticks: Melt 1/4 cup of Crisco (or bacon drippings) and mix that into the batter. For corn stick pans, I find cooking spray works the best. I use two of these [7 stick pans](#) per recipe and usually have a little bit leftover, enough for 3 or 4 more sticks after the first 2 trays come out. Spray the corn stick pans generously with non-stick spray, then stick them in the oven while it preheats. For the corn sticks I find it easier to pipe the batter into the hot pans, so I scoop the batter into a zipper bag, cut off the tip and pipe it into the hot pans. It's just easier to work fast with those hot pans that way. I also reduce the heat slightly to 425 degrees F and bake for about 10 to 12 minutes or so until they are golden brown.

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