

How to Make Hardtack

An Excellent Survival Food

Knowing how to make hardtack will not only impress your friends but is an excellent way to store flour in your survival food cache for long periods of time.

You may have heard of hardtack when reading or watching TV documentaries about long sea voyages, military campaigns, explorers, prospectors, and pioneers. When these proven, experienced survivors rely upon a particular piece of gear or survival food you know you would do well to emulate them.

Hardtack is legendary for its resilience to rough handling and extreme conditions. It can be stored for years without ill effect as long as it is kept dry and is easy and inexpensive to make. Durable, nutritious, and light in weight, hardtack sounds like a nearly perfect survival food!

Names for Hardtack include:

- Hardtack
- Pilot Bread
- Ship's Biscuit
- Sea Biscuit
- Sea Bread
- Dog Biscuit
- Tooth Dullers
- Sheet Iron
- Molar Breakers



Hardtack is Good Survival Food

Make Your Own Hardtack Recipe

There are a number of good hardtack recipes that you can try at home that will be the subject of another Survival Topic. To begin with, perhaps the most basic and historically accurate is this army hardtack recipe:

- **Hardtack ingredients:**
 - 4 cups flour, preferably whole wheat
 - 4 teaspoons salt
 - Water - about 2 cups

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees F. Mix your flour and salt in a bowl, adding just enough water to form dough that does not stick to your hands or the bowl as you kneed it. Then roll the dough out into a rough rectangle about half an inch thick. Cut into three inch squares.

Now using a nail or other object press a patter of four rows of four holes each in each square. Do not go through the entire thickness of the dough. Then turn the hardtack dough over and do the same on the other side.

Next put the squares on an ungreased pan and bake in the oven for half an hour. Then turn the hardtack squares over and bake for another half hour so that the hardtack is just a bit brown on both sides.

When you take the hardtack out of the oven it will be somewhat brittle, but as it cools it will become very hard – hopefully as “hard as a brick”!

How to Eat Hardtack

Now that you know how to make hardtack you will need to learn how to eat it! Because it tends to be much too hard to chew when dry (hence the nicknames related to broken jaw parts), hardtack is typically pre-soaked in coffee, crumbled into soups and stews, or fried with bacon and eggs or whatever else was on the menu.

I highly recommend you give making your own hardtack a try. It is fun, easy to do, and makes an excellent survival food that you can take anywhere.