

## Digestives

*If you like digestives, you might think your favourite brand is hard to improve on. But*

once you've made your own, you'll never look back.

I give two options for the sugar quantity in the recipe below: the less sweet biscuits are better suited to pâtés and charcuterie, while the sweeter ones are good with cheese, or naked and unadorned with a cup of tea. If you like, make them with half wholemeal and half spelt flour, or entirely with spelt flour, to give a slightly nuttier taste.

Makes 35–40

250g wholemeal flour,  
or wholemeal spelt flour

250g unsalted butter,  
cut into small cubes and  
slightly softened

250g medium oatmeal

75g or 125g soft brown  
sugar, depending on  
how sweet you want  
your biscuits

2 teaspoons fine sea salt

2 teaspoons baking  
powder

About 1 tablespoon milk

Pulse the flour and butter together in a food processor until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs, or you can do this in a large bowl by rubbing the butter and flour together with your fingertips. Add the oatmeal, sugar, salt and baking powder and mix together with your hands, adding a little milk a few drops at a time until everything comes together into a slightly sticky dough.

Dust with more flour, then press into a disc about 25cm in diameter. Wrap in cling film and chill for at least 30 minutes, to rest and firm up a bit. The dough will keep well in the fridge for a few days. Remove it from the fridge about an hour before you want to roll it out, as it will become very hard.

Dust the dough with flour and roll it out carefully, dusting regularly with more flour to stop it sticking, until it is about 3–4mm thick. As it is quite sticky and brittle, you may find it easier to roll between 2 sheets of greaseproof paper or cling film, also dusted with flour.

Cut the biscuits out with a 6–7cm cutter and use a spatula to transfer them to non-stick baking sheets (or ordinary baking sheets lined with baking parchment). Place in an oven preheated to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and bake for up to 10 minutes, checking regularly after the first 5 minutes. They should be golden brown around the edges and lightly coloured on top.

Remove from the oven and leave the biscuits to cool and firm up on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack to cool completely.