

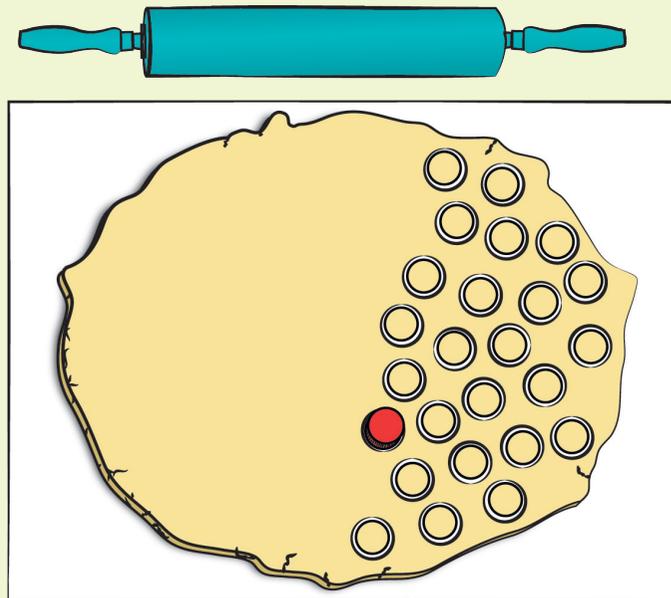
Bake a Cookie Earth

To understand why the ocean is so important, it helps to visualize how watery Earth really is. About 70 percent of the planet is covered by ocean, but to get a good sense of what this looks like, make some cookie calculations. Use a family sugar cookie recipe, or buy a package of sugar cookie mix.

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

YOU'LL NEED

- ✦ Sugar cookie dough
- ✦ Oven
- ✦ Parchment paper
- ✦ Flour
- ✦ Rolling pin
- ✦ Plastic bottle cap
- ✦ 2 cookie sheets
- ✦ Butter knife
- ✦ Blue frosting
- ✦ Green frosting
- ✦ Red frosting (optional)

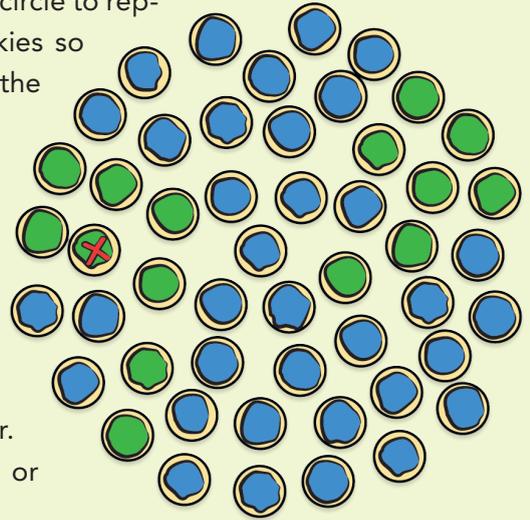


1. Prepare your cookie dough by following a recipe or the directions on a package of sugar cookie mix. Using a mix often requires adding butter, an egg, and a little bit of flour.
2. Preheat the oven to whatever temperature the directions on the package or the recipe indicates.
3. Spread parchment paper on a flat surface and sprinkle some flour on top. Use clean hands to place the dough on the parchment paper.
4. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin until it's about ½-inch (1¼-cm) thick.
5. Use a clean plastic bottle cap as a cookie cutter to punch 50 tiny cookie cutouts in the dough. It works best to press the bottle cap into the dough and then twist it a couple of times to make sure the cookie is separated from the rest of the dough.
6. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper and place the tiny cookies on them, about an inch (2½ cm) apart. Two batches may be necessary.
7. Bake the cookies for about 8–10 minutes (time will vary depending on the recipe you're using), keeping an eye on them to make sure they don't get brown. Finished cookies should be firm when cooled but still light in color.

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ACTIVITY, continued

- Place the cookies on a cooling rack or plate to cool.
- Once the cookies have completely cooled, lay parchment paper down on a flat space for decorating and place the cookies on it.
- Spread blue frosting on 70 percent of the cookies (35 cookies). The blue cookies represent ocean.
- Spread green frosting on the remaining 30 percent (15 cookies). The green cookies represent land, including all of Earth's continents.
- Next, place the cookies close together in a circle to represent Planet Earth. Place the green cookies so they look like Earth's continents and fill in the spaces with ocean cookies.
- If you have red frosting handy, plot yourself on the "map" by making a tiny red X.
- Take a step back and observe your cookie Earth. It's mostly blue, just like the real thing. Share what you've learned about the percentage of ocean versus land on our planet with a friend or family member. (Maybe share some cookies with a friend or family member too!)



Tip

Make this project simpler by baking 10 larger (2-inch, or 5-cm) cookies to represent Earth, or make it more difficult by baking 100 bottle-cap-sized cookies. In both cases, frost 70 percent of the cookies blue and 30 percent of the cookies green.