

THE PANTRY BINDER

Beginner Baker Pantry & Equipment Checklist

The minimum equipment kit, the year-2 upgrades, and three printable pantry checklists — sourdough, enriched + sweet, and cottage food packaging.

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The minimum kit for a beginner cottage baker

You don't need a \$4,000 stand mixer to start. You need a scale, a Dutch oven, and a thermometer. Everything below is split into 'start here' essentials and 'eventually' upgrades.

Essentials — buy these first

Item	Notes	Approx. cost
Digital kitchen scale (1 g)	Bakers' percentage requires grams. Non-negotiable.	\$15–\$25
Instant-read thermometer	Doneness + dough temp control.	\$15–\$40
Dutch oven (5–7 qt)	Steam + crust. Lodge cast iron is fine.	\$60–\$120
Bench scraper	Dough handling and counter cleanup.	\$8
Banneton (8" round)	Final proof shape. Rattan with linen liner.	\$15
Razor / lame	Scoring. A regular razor blade works.	\$5–\$15
Plastic dough scraper	Bowl scraping during mixing.	\$5
Half-sheet pans + parchment	Everything else.	\$25
Mesh strainer (fine)	Flour dusting, sifting.	\$10
Stand mixer (optional)	Hand mixing works. Save for year 2.	\$0 or \$300

Eventually — year 2+ upgrades

Item	Why	Approx. cost
Infrared thermometer	Lamination dough/butter temps. Game-changer.	\$25
Pullman pan with lid	Sandwich loaves for cottage sale.	\$30
Couche (linen)	Baguette proofing.	\$25
Pizza steel	6-minute home pizza. Forever investment.	\$80
Pastry brush (silicone)	Egg wash without bristle loss.	\$8
Sheet of butter parchment	Lamination work surface.	\$20
Cooling racks (3)	Cottage bake volume needs three.	\$30
Sharp paring knife	Galette trimming, fruit prep.	\$25
Stand mixer dough hook	Daily-bake households eventually need one.	\$300+

Pantry checklist — sourdough

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|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bread flour (high-protein, 12.7%+) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rye flour (for starter) | <input type="checkbox"/> Active sourdough starter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All-purpose flour | <input type="checkbox"/> Fine sea salt | <input type="checkbox"/> Olive oil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole wheat flour | <input type="checkbox"/> Instant yeast (backup) | <input type="checkbox"/> Honey |

Pantry checklist — enriched + sweet

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|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsalted butter (European 82%+) | <input type="checkbox"/> Vanilla extract | <input type="checkbox"/> Baking powder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole milk | <input type="checkbox"/> Cocoa powder | <input type="checkbox"/> Cornstarch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs (large) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate (60–70%) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cream cheese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Granulated sugar | <input type="checkbox"/> Cinnamon | <input type="checkbox"/> Sour cream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark brown sugar | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutmeg | <input type="checkbox"/> Molasses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Powdered sugar | <input type="checkbox"/> Baking soda | <input type="checkbox"/> Flaky salt (for finishing) |

Pantry checklist — cottage food packaging

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|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cellophane bags (4×6, 6×9) | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown paper bags (S, M, L) | <input type="checkbox"/> Glassine sheets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twist ties or stickers | <input type="checkbox"/> Bakery boxes (½ sheet) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tissue paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avery oval label sheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Cake circles | <input type="checkbox"/> Business cards |

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