Article No. 01039 (262 g/9.24 oz.)

Baking Powder was introduced in the mid-1800s as a leavener, or rising agent, for baked goods. It was created by mixing bicarbonate of soda (baking soda, an alkaline) with a mild acid, such as tartaric acid (cream of tartar). This was "single-acting" baking powder and created a rising action through the release of gases produced by the interacting acid and alkaline substances. It was called "single-acting" because the leavening gases were all released at one time—upon contact with the moisture in the batter.

Today's baking powder still contains baking soda as its alkaline ingredient, but uses a combination of acids, which creates a "double-acting" effect in which leavening gases are released once on contact with moisture, and again during baking. This "double-acting" baking powder is the only variety commercially available today.

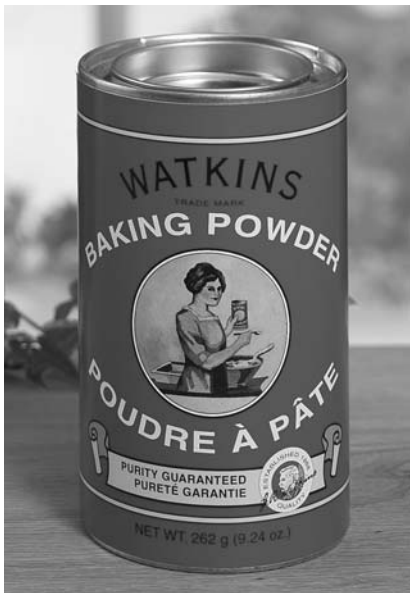
The acidifying ingredients used in today's baking powders vary. **Watkins Baking Powder is aluminum-free.** Cornstarch is added as a moisture absorber to aid in storage.

When to use Baking Powder

Baking powder and baking soda are often confused…what's the difference?

Baking soda is used for certain cookies and other items that should spread out, rather than rise. It will only cause baked goods to rise vertically when used with an acid like buttermilk, yogurt, or molasses. Baking powder already has an acid added to it, so baked goods will rise without additional leavening ingredients.

- For the highest meringue, add some baking powder to room-temperature egg whites before beating them. As you beat the whites, add 2 to 3 tablespoons of granulated sugar for each egg used, beating continuously.
- To help maintain freshness, turn the can upside down once a month. Each package is freshness dated.
- To test the leavening ability of your Baking Powder, place 1/2 tsp in 1/4 cup of hot water. If the powder is usable, the water will bubble actively.



Baking Powder Biscuits

2 cups/500 mL sifted all-purpose flour
1 tbsp/15 mL **Watkins Baking Powder**
1/2 tsp/2.5 mL salt
5 tbsp/75 mL vegetable shortening
3/4 cup/180 mL milk

Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add shortening and cut into dry ingredients with two knives or pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Make a well in center and gradually add milk, stirring until a soft dough forms. Turn out onto lightly floured board and knead lightly for 30 seconds. Roll out 1/2 to 3/4-inch/1 to 2-cm thick. Cut with a floured biscuit cutter. Arrange on greased baking sheet. Bake at 450°F/235°C for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 12 biscuits.