




Non-standard units for measuring weight

Look at the recipe below, which tells you how to make salt dough. You can use salt dough to make models.

Salt dough recipe

	<p>Ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 cups of plain flour• 1 cup of table salt• 1 cup of water• 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
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Instructions

Mix the flour and salt in a bowl. Add the water, a little at a time, until the dough becomes stretchy. Add the vegetable oil and then knead the dough for about ten minutes or until it's smooth. If the dough's too sticky then add a little more flour; if it's too dry then add more water.

Did you notice that for this recipe you measure out the main ingredients using cups?

Measuring out in this way means that you're using **non-standard units of measurement**. Cups come in different shapes and sizes, so a cupful isn't a fixed amount or weight - unless you use a standard measuring cup.

A non-standard unit of measurement is one that isn't fixed.

In the salt dough recipe, the amounts of flour, salt and water you use will vary depending on the size of your cup. You can measure things out like this when it's not important to be exact.

Other examples of using non-standard units might be:

- making concrete using three bucketfuls of sand mixed with one bucketful of cement
- following a recipe that suggests adding two handfuls of herbs