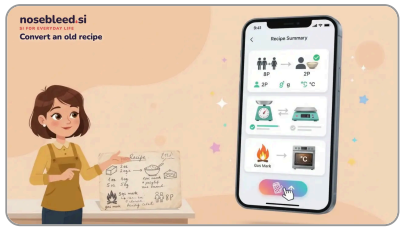
Convert an old recipe



Use AI to change ounces and gas marks into grams and oven temperatures, and scale a recipe up or down, then check the numbers.

By the end, you'll be able to:

- share an old recipe with AI
- convert weights and oven temperatures
- check AI's numbers before you bake

Warm-up Do you have an old family recipe?

Talk about it with your group. Who wrote it? Is it in a book, on a card, or in your head?

1 Read Gran's recipe

Here's a made-up recipe card. Circle anything a young cook today might not understand.

GRAN'S RECIPE CARD

Victoria sponge

8 oz self-raising flour · 8 oz butter · 8 oz caster sugar · 4 eggs

Cream the butter and sugar. Beat in the eggs. Fold in the flour. Divide between two 8-inch tins. Bake at gas mark 4 for 20 to 25 minutes.

What does "cream the butter and sugar" mean?

2 Ask AI to convert it

If you have a device, type in the recipe, or share a photo of it, and try this prompt.

TRY THIS PROMPT

Please convert this old recipe to grams and to oven temperatures in °C, including for a fan oven. Then halve it, so it makes one smaller cake. Show both versions, and explain any old-fashioned words.

3 Check the numbers

An AI gave this answer. Use the table below to find **two** mistakes.

EXAMPLE AI ANSWER

Flour 450 g · butter 225 g · sugar 225 g · 4 eggs.
Bake at 220°C (200°C fan) for 20 to 25 minutes.

Ounces	Grams (roughly)
4 oz	115 g
8 oz	225 g
16 oz (1 lb)	450 g

Gas mark	°C	°C fan
4	180	160
7	220	200

The mistakes are:

4 Halve it

Work out the half-size cake yourself.

Flour: _____

Butter: _____

Sugar: _____

Eggs: _____

Would you use the same tins, and the same baking time? What would you change?

5 Good habits

- Check AI's conversions: an oven 40 degrees too hot can ruin a cake.
- Ovens vary. Check your oven's own guide, and look at the cake near the end.
- Keep the original card safe. Take a photo of it too, as a backup.

> **No device?** In pairs, convert Gran's recipe using the tables on page 2, then halve it. Compare answers.

Find out more: read the free step-by-step guide, with a 10-second video, at **nosebleed.si/ideas/convert-an-old-recipe**

Teacher notes: Convert an old recipe

Time: 45 to 60 minutes

Level: beginners; no AI experience needed

Group: any size; works well in pairs

You'll need: a copy per learner; calculators (optional); phones or tablets with an AI chat app (optional)

Before the session

Try the prompt yourself. The conversions on page 2 are the rounded figures used in most UK cookery books. Bring an old recipe book if you have one: learners enjoy the old words.

Running order

5 min	**Warm-up.** Family recipes.
10 min	**Part 1.** Old words and measures.
20 min	**Parts 2 and 3.** Try the prompt, then check the numbers.
10 min	**Part 4.** Halve the recipe.
5 min	**Wrap-up.** Check the numbers before you bake.

Answers: Part 1

Likely: oz, gas mark, cream, fold in, 8-inch tins. **Cream** means beating butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy.

Answers: Part 3

1. Flour is **225 g**, not 450 g (that's 1 lb).
2. Gas mark 4 is **180°C (160°C fan)**, not 220°C.

Answers: Part 4

Flour 115 g; butter 115 g; sugar 115 g; 2 eggs. Use smaller tins (or one 8-inch tin), and check it a little sooner.

Discussion points

- 1 oz is about 28 g; cookery books round 8 oz to 225 g.
- An 8-inch tin is about 20 cm.
- A photo of a handwritten card can be misread. Check every number.

© FirstM Ltd 2026