

# Cleo Coyle's Maple Bacon Breakfast Muffins

## 2 Ways: from Scratch or Pancake Mix

Text & photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi,  
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as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband,  
Marc Cerasini

*One bite of this outstanding muffin evokes the flavors in a classic pancake breakfast: bacon, maple syrup, and a fluffy buttermilk flapjack. To create this treat, I started with my own favorite maple muffin recipe and swapped regular milk for buttermilk to mimic the richness of an old-fashioned buttermilk pancake batter. Next I folded in caramelized bacon bits, made from a recipe that I first shared in our 9th Coffeeshouse Mystery, [Roast Mortem](#), a tribute to firefighters (with firehouse recipes). Finally, before baking these muffins, I topped them with a sprinkling of more candied bacon bits and a light drizzle of maple syrup. The muffin itself is a bonus recipe from [A Brew to a Kill](#), which takes readers on a culinary odyssey through New York City after a food truck war turns deadly. My husband (and partner in crime writing) flipped for these muffins. May you eat with joy! ~ Cleo*

### **From Scratch Version**

Makes 6 regular-size muffins (or 12 mini muffins)

#### Ingredients for Bacon:

Caramelized bacon bits consisting of...

- 6 slices of bacon, smoked or maple
- + 6 teaspoons of light brown sugar

#### For Batter:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon Kosher salt (*if using table salt, use only a pinch*)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten with fork
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1/3 cup + 1½ teaspoons pure maple syrup (*not "pancake syrup," see pg. 2 note*)\*
- 1/2 cup buttermilk (*I use light*)



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**\*Note:** “Pancake syrup” is not maple syrup. It consists of corn syrup flavored with maple extract. If you use pancake syrup instead of pure maple syrup in this recipe, be warned that your muffins will be dry. Use pure maple syrup for best results.

**Step 1 – Make caramelized bacon bits:** First preheat oven to 375° F. Muffins need a very hot oven to rise properly, so give the oven a good 20 minutes of pre-heating. Meanwhile, cut 6 slices of bacon into small pieces. (Tip: I use kitchen shears.) Sauté over medium-high heat until half-cooked—still soft and flexible with fat just beginning to change color. Drain fat. Add 6 teaspoons of light brown sugar (one teaspoon for each bacon slice). Stir and continue stirring over heat until bacon bits are cooked through but still flexible (**do not** cook until crisp and brittle). Transfer bacon bits to a plate and break up any clumps into a single layer. Set aside to cool.

**Step 2 – One bowl mixing method:** Combine flour, 1 Tablespoon brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Whisk until well blended. Make a well in the center. Add fork-beaten egg, canola oil, buttermilk, and 1/3 cup of the maple syrup (you will use the final 1½ teaspoons from the ingredient list later). Whisk the batter until well blended, but do not over-mix or you’ll develop the gluten in the flour and your muffins will be tough instead of tender. The batter will be loose. Fold in the bacon bits, *reserving enough* to sprinkle over the muffin tops before baking in the next step.

**Step 3 – Sprinkle and Drizzle:** Coat 6 muffin cups and top of muffin pan with non-stick spray. If using paper liners, coat the papers as well as the top of the pan. Divide batter among the 6 sprayed or lined muffin cups. Sprinkle the reserved caramelized bacon bits over the top of each cup’s batter and drizzle a small amount (¼ teaspoon, no more) of maple syrup on top of the bacon bits and batter.

**Step 4 – Bake:** If baking standard muffins, check them in 15 minutes for doneness. If baking mini-muffins check them in 8 minutes. Muffins may need a few more minutes than stated, depending on your oven. They’re done when a toothpick inserted comes out with no wet batter clinging to it.

**Note:** The maple syrup drizzle will cause the muffin Tops to stick a bit to the pan. Simply use a butter knife to gently free it before removing muffins from cups. FYI - I use the toothpick method to remove the muffins from their pans. Stick two toothpicks into the muffin from opposite ends and gently lift.





## Cleo Coyle's Maple Bacon Breakfast Muffins: Pancake Mix Version

*For fun, I included this “pancake mix” option for making the batter in this recipe. The difference between the scratch recipe and this one is mainly texture. The scratch version has a more cake-like crumb while the texture of the pancake mix version is more like a cornmeal muffin, but it’s good too, and worth a try if you’re curious—and have pancake mix handy. ~ Cleo*

Makes 6 regular-size muffins (or 12 mini muffins)

### Ingredients:

#### For bacon:

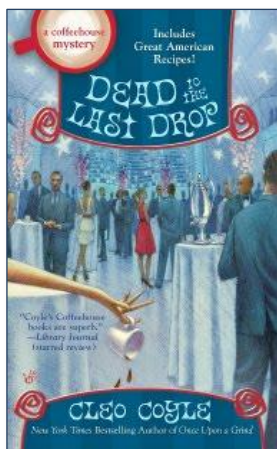
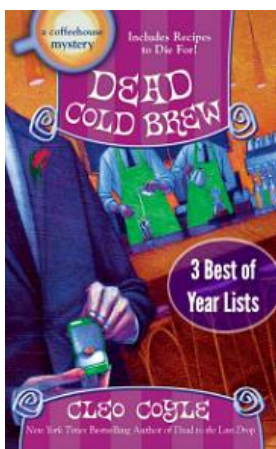
Caramelized bacon bits consisting of  
6 slices of maple bacon  
+ 6 teaspoons of light brown sugar

#### For batter:

1-½ cup dry buttermilk flavor pancake mix (\*See note on brand.)  
1 Tablespoon light brown sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 egg, lightly beaten with fork  
2 Tablespoons canola oil  
1/3 cup pure maple syrup (and not “pancake syrup”)  
½ cup whole milk (1% or 2% will work; but do not use skim milk)

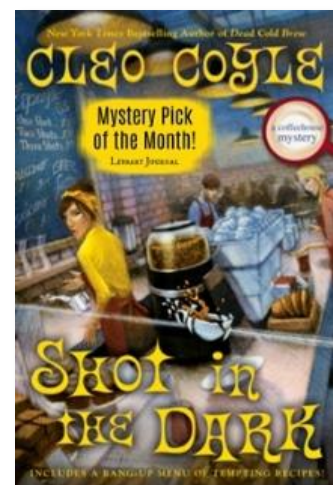
**\*Note on pancake mix:** Do not use Bisquick. Do not use a “just add water” mix. Use a mix that requires the addition of milk, eggs, and oil or melted butter. (I use Aunt Jemima Buttermilk flavor.) No matter what brand you choose, a buttermilk flavored mix will give the best results.

**Directions:** Follow directions in previous recipe with one exception. In Step 2, use this batter instead: Whisk together pancake mix, 1 T. brown sugar, baking powder, fork-beaten egg, oil, maple syrup, and milk. Mix until well blended, but do not over-mix. Fold in bacon bits, *reserving enough* to decorate muffin tops before baking. Batter will be loose. (Now move to Step 3 in the “from scratch” recipe.) May you...



*Eat with joy! ~ Cleo*

The [Coffeehouse Mysteries](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes. To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle’s online coffeehouse at [www.CoffeehouseMystery.com](http://www.CoffeehouseMystery.com) And her recipe blog at [www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com](http://www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com)



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