- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 30 minutes
- Cooling Time: 45 minutes
- Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Servings: 16 square brownies
- Difficulty Level: Easy to Intermediate
- Sweetness Level: Medium-High
- Richness Level: High (Fudgy/Gooey)

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Equipment Needed

- 8×8-inch square metal baking pan
- Parchment paper
- Heatproof glass or stainless steel bowl (for double boiler)
- Medium saucepan
- Large mixing bowl
- Electric hand mixer or sturdy balloon whisk
- Rubber spatula
- Measuring cups and spoons or digital kitchen scale

Ingredients List

For the Chocolate Base:

- Unsalted Butter: ½ cup (115g / 1 stick), chopped into small cubes
- Dark Chocolate Chunks or Quality Chocolate Chips (60–70% Cacao): 1 cup (170g)
- Dutch-Processed Cocoa Powder: ⅓ cup (35g), sifted

For the Sugar & Wet Mixture:

- Granulated Sugar: 1 cup (200g)
- Light Brown Sugar (packed): ½ cup (100g)
- Large Eggs: 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- Pure Vanilla Extract: 1 tablespoon (15ml)
- Espresso Powder or Instant Coffee: ½ teaspoon (optional, enhances chocolate intensity without adding coffee flavor)

For the Dry Base & Mix-ins:

- All-Purpose Flour: ¾ cup (95g)
- Fine Sea Salt: ½ teaspoon
- Chopped Walnuts: 1 cup (120g), roughly chopped and divided (¾ cup for batter, ¼ cup for topping)

Cooking Intensities & Thermal Guide

Cooking Stage	Heat Intensity / Temperature	Duration	Target Outcome
Walnut Toasting	Low-Medium (300°F / 150°C)	8 minutes	Fragrant, toasted crunch without bitterness
Chocolate Melting	Gentle Steam / Low Direct Heat	4–6 minutes	Smooth, glossy mixture; no scorched cocoa solids
Egg & Sugar Whipping	High Speed (Electric Mixer / Whisk)	3–4 minutes	Pale, ribbon-like texture for that iconic crackly crust
Baking Stage	Medium (350°F / 175°C)	28–32 minutes	Set edges, soft fudgy center with minimal jiggle

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Prep and Toast the Walnuts

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Line an 8×8-inch baking pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on two opposite sides to create a sling for easy removal later. Lightly grease the parchment with cooking spray or butter.

2. Spread the chopped walnuts across a small baking sheet in a single layer.

3. Toast in the preheated oven at 300°F (150°C) for 7 to 8 minutes until fragrant and slightly browned. Remove from the oven and let cool completely.

Step 2: Melt the Chocolate and Butter

1. Set up a double boiler by bringing 1 inch of water to a gentle simmer in a saucepan over low heat.

2. Place a heatproof bowl over the saucepan, ensuring the bottom of the bowl does not touch the boiling water.

3. Combine the cubed unsalted butter and 1 cup of chopped dark chocolate in the bowl.

4. Stir continuously using a rubber spatula over low, gentle steam until the butter and chocolate melt completely into a smooth, glossy liquid.

5. Remove the bowl from heat, stir in the Dutch-processed cocoa powder and espresso powder until smooth, and set aside to cool slightly for 5 minutes.

Step 3: Whip Eggs and Sugars for the Shiny Top

1. In a large bowl, combine the 3 room-temperature eggs, granulated sugar, and light brown sugar.

2. Using an electric hand mixer on high speed (or vigorously with a wire whisk), beat the mixture for 3 to 4 minutes.

3. Stop when the mixture doubles in volume, turns pale yellow, and falls off the beaters in thick ribbon-like folds. *This step dissolves the sugar into the eggs, creating the signature papery, crinkly crust.*

4. Beat in the vanilla extract until fully incorporated.

Step 4: Combine Wet Ingredients

1. Slowly pour the warm melted chocolate-butter mixture into the whipped egg mixture.

2. Fold gently with a rubber spatula using broad, sweeping movements from the bottom of the bowl upward until fully combined and uniform in color. Avoid over-mixing to preserve the whipped air pockets.

Step 5: Fold Dry Ingredients and Walnuts

1. Whisk together the all-purpose flour and fine sea salt in a small bowl.

2. Sift the flour mixture directly over the wet chocolate batter.

3. Gently fold the batter using a rubber spatula just until the flour streaks disappear (about 12 to 15 folds). Do not over-mix, or the brownies will turn cakey instead of fudgy.

4. Fold in ¾ cup of the toasted chopped walnuts until evenly dispersed throughout the dense batter.

Step 6: Bake to Fudgy Perfection

1. Pour the thick brownie batter into your prepared 8×8-inch baking pan, using an offset spatula to smooth the surface into an even layer.

2. Sprinkle the remaining ¼ cup of chopped walnuts evenly across the top, lightly pressing them into the surface so they adhere.

3. Bake on the center rack at 350°F (175°C) for 28 to 32 minutes.

4. Test for doneness at the 28-minute mark by inserting a wooden toothpick into the center:

    - Ideal Result: The toothpick should come out with a few moist, fudgy crumbs attached (not wet batter, and not completely clean).

    - If wet batter clings to the toothpick, bake for an additional 2 to 3 minutes and check again.

Step 7: Cooling and Slicing

1. Remove the pan from the oven and place it on a wire cooling rack.

2. Allow the brownies to cool completely inside the pan for at least 45 to 60 minutes. As they cool, the molten center sets into a dense, chewy fudgy texture.

3. For ultra-neat, clean squares, chill the cooled pan in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before slicing.

4. Use the parchment paper sling to lift the brownie slab out onto a cutting board. Slice into a 4×4 grid using a long, sharp knife, wiping the blade clean between every cut.

Baker’s Tips for Success

- Room Temperature Eggs: Cold eggs can shock the melted butter and chocolate, causing the batter to seize or curdle. Ensure your eggs are at room temperature before beating.

- Don’t Skip the Espresso Powder: A small amount of espresso powder elevates the chocolate flavor, giving it depth without making the brownies taste like coffee.

- Metal vs. Glass Pan: Metal baking pans distribute heat more evenly and produce crispier edges with fudgy centers. If using a glass pan, reduce the oven temperature to 325°F (160°C) and extend baking time by 5 to 8 minutes.

Nutritional Information

Nutritional values are calculated per single square serving (1 of 16 brownies) based on standard ingredients.

Nutrient	Amount per Serving	% Daily Value (DV)*
Calories	280 kcal	—
Total Fat	17 g	22%
Saturated Fat	7 g	35%
Trans Fat	0 g	—
Cholesterol	45 mg	15%
Sodium	95 mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates	30 g	11%
Dietary Fiber	2 g	7%
Total Sugars	21 g	—
Added Sugars	20 g	40%
Protein	4 g	8%
Calcium	25 mg	2%
Iron	1.8 mg	10%
Potassium	140 mg	3%