

Baking a traditional [mooncake](#) takes **15 to 25 minutes** in total, but the entire process of assembling, baking, and resting takes anywhere from **2 hours to 3 days**. Because mooncake fillings (like lotus seed or red bean paste) are already fully cooked, you are only baking the exterior pastry shell. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#), [\[4\]](#)

The Multi-Step Baking Process

Traditional Cantonese mooncakes are baked using a strict, multi-step method to preserve their delicate stamped patterns: [\[1\]](#)

1. **Initial Bake (5–8 minutes):** Bake at 350°F (177°C) to set the shape and harden the dough.
2. **Egg Wash Application:** Remove from the oven, cool slightly, and brush with a thin layer of egg wash for a golden sheen.
3. **Final Bake (10–15 minutes):** Return to the oven until the pastry turns an even, deep golden brown. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

The "Oil Return" Resting Stage

You cannot eat traditional mooncakes right out of the oven. They will be dry and hard. They must rest in a sealed container at room temperature for **2 to 3 days**. During this time, the oils from the filling seep into the crust (a process called *hui you* or oil return), making the pastry soft, glossy, and tender. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)

Snowskin Mooncakes (No Bake)

If you are making **Snowskin Mooncakes**, the cooking time is **0 minutes**. These use a cooked glutinous rice flour dough wrapper and are served chilled, bypassing the oven entirely.

Are you planning to make **traditional baked** mooncakes or the **no-bake snowskin** variety? I can provide a step-by-step breakdown or an **egg wash recipe** depending on which one you choose.