



Bacon Brown Sugar Chicken Tenders

Sweet, savory, smoky, and caramelized



SCAN FOR ORIGINAL

OVEN
375°F

BAKE
25-35 min

CHICKEN
165°F

BEST BACON
Thin-cut

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 pounds chicken tenders
- 8 to 10 slices bacon, cut in half
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- Fresh parsley, optional for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven. Preheat your oven to 375°F. Line a baking dish or sheet pan with foil for easier cleanup, then lightly grease it or place a wire rack on top if you want the bacon to crisp even more.
2. Mix the sugar and seasonings. In a shallow bowl, combine the brown sugar, garlic powder, smoked paprika, black pepper, salt, and cayenne if using. Stir until evenly mixed.
3. Wrap the chicken. Wrap each chicken tender with a half slice or full slice of bacon, depending on the size. Press gently so it stays in place. If needed, secure it with a toothpick.
4. Coat in the brown sugar mixture. Roll or press each bacon-wrapped tender into the mixture until well coated. Arrange on the prepared pan or rack, leaving a little space between each one.
5. Bake until caramelized. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, depending on thickness, until the chicken is cooked through and the bacon is browned. The chicken should reach 165°F.
6. Broil for extra color if needed. Broil for 1 to 2 minutes at the end for crispier bacon. Watch closely because brown sugar can burn quickly.
7. Rest and serve. Let the tenders rest for a few minutes before serving so the glaze settles slightly and the juices stay in the chicken.

SWAPS & NOTES

Chicken tenders cook quickly and stay juicy, but boneless skinless chicken breasts cut into similar-size strips also work. Thin-cut bacon wraps easily and crisps more reliably. Thick-cut bacon can be used, but it may need more baking time. Cayenne is optional. Leave it out for a milder version or add a little extra for sweet heat.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Use a rack if you have one. Elevating the tenders helps hot air circulate and allows the bacon to crisp more evenly instead of sitting in rendered fat. Don't overcrowd the pan. Giving each tender room helps everything roast instead of steam. Watch the final minutes. Brown sugar caramelizes fast, so these can darken quickly at the end. Serving as an appetizer? Insert toothpicks before baking so they are easy to grab and serve from a platter.