

Recipe Packet: Baking Basics – Easy Bread Baking

Basic White Bread Loaf

Makes 2 loaves

Volume	Weight	Ingredient
2 cups	16 oz	Warm water
2 ¼ teaspoons	.25 oz	1 package Active Dry Yeast
1 tablespoon	--	Granulated sugar
5 cups	22 oz (1# 6 oz)	All Purpose Flour
6 tablespoons	3 oz	Unsalted Butter, divided
2 teaspoons	--	Sea salt
--	--	Spray oil
1 cup	8 oz	Ice Water

Special Equipment:

Two 9" X 5" metal loaf pans
Pastry brush
Sheet pan

Dough scraper or bench knife
Plastic wrap

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Set a sheetpan on the lowest rack position of the oven. Set another rack in the center position of the oven.

In a mixing bowl of a stand mixer, stir the water, yeast and sugar together until thoroughly dissolved. Let stand for 5 minutes to activate the yeast. Add the flour and beat with a dough hook until the dough is smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Add 4 tablespoons of butter and the salt and continue to knead in until smooth and elastic, about 5 more minutes.

Lightly dust your work surface and turn the dough out. Knead the dough by hand, stretching, folding and turning, for 5 minutes. Use a small amount of flour each time the dough becomes too sticky.

Lightly spray the mixing bowl with oil and place the dough back into the bowl. Lightly spray the surface of the dough with oil and cover. Let the dough rise for 45 minutes, or until doubled in size.

To shape the loaves, carefully turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Cut the dough into two equal parts. Stretch one piece of dough into a rough rectangle. Fold in the short ends of the rectangle until the dough is the length of the pan. Then, fold in the long edge farthest from you over to the middle, and fold the other long edge over the other side. Firmly compress into a tight cylinder and place into a loaf pan, seam side down. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and repeat the process with the second piece of dough. Allow the loaves to rise until double in shape, about 30 minutes.

Before baking, melt the remaining butter and brush over the top of the bread. Set the loaf pans on the rack in the center of the oven. Quickly pour a cup of ice water into the pan on the bottom rack and immediately close the oven door.

Bake for 35 minutes, or until the loaves are golden brown and delicious. The loaves should be firm and their internal temperature should be 210°F. Immediately unmold the loaves and cool on their sides on a wire rack. Cool them completely before slicing.

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Herb and Cheese Bread Knots

Makes 12 knots

Volume	Weight	Ingredient
1 cup	8 oz	Whole Milk
1 cup	8 oz	Water
2 tablespoons	1 oz	Unsalted butter
1 tablespoon	--	Granulated Sugar
5 ½ cups	24.25 oz	All Purpose Flour
1 envelope	.25 oz	Active Dry Yeast
¼ cup	--	Chopped herbs (Parsley, chives, dill)
1 ½ teaspoon	--	Sea Salt
½ cup	.5 oz	Shredded cheese
1	--	Egg Yolk
1 tablespoon	.5 oz	Water
2 tablespoons	--	Coarse Salt

Special Equipment:

Pastry brush
2 Sheet pans
Parchment paper

Dough scraper or bench knife
Plastic wrap

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Combine the milk, water, butter and sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil and remove from the heat and let it cool to room temperature.

In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour and the yeast. Pour in the milk mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until the dough begins to come together. If you have a stand mixer, you can use the dough hook and mix for about 8 minutes on medium speed. If not, knead the dough on a floured surface for about 10 minutes. Add the herbs, salt and cheese and knead for 8 minutes more. Place the dough in a bowl oiled with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and coat it all over. Cover with plastic wrap and let it rise until double in size, about 1 hour.

Punch down the dough and divide into 12 equal portions. They should be a little larger than a golf ball. Roll out a ball of dough into a snake about 12" long and tie into a knot by twisting the ends together to create a loop and laying the legs over the loop. Press your thumbs to seal the ends to the loop. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Repeat with the remaining knots.

Set the knots aside until they double in size, about 20 minutes. Make an eggwash with the egg and water. Brush onto the tops of the knots, sprinkle with coarse salt and bake in a preheated oven for 10 minutes. Rotate the pans and continue to bake for another 15, or until they are nice a brown on top and bottom.

Remove from the oven and slide onto a wire cooling rack. Cool to room temperature before serving.

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Braided Challah

Makes 1 loaf

Volume	Weight	Ingredient
1 cup	8 oz	Whole Milk, Warm
1 tablespoon	8 grams (.3 oz)	Active Dry Yeast
4 ½ cups	20 oz (1#, 4 oz)	All Purpose Flour
1/3 cup	2.5 oz	Granulated Sugar
2 large	--	Whole Eggs
1	--	Yolk (save the white for eggwash)
¼ teaspoon	--	Ground Turmeric (optional)
4 tablespoons	2 oz	Unsalted Butter, softened to room temperature
2 teaspoons	--	Sea Salt
1	--	Whole Egg (+ the eggwhite)
1 tablespoon	--	Water
2 teaspoons	--	Poppy Seeds (or Sesame)

Special Equipment:

Pastry brush
2 Sheet pans
Parchment paper

Plastic wrap
Dough scraper or bench knife

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Dissolve yeast in warm milk in the mixing bowl of a stand mixer. Let it active, about 5 minutes. Add the flour, sugar and eggs (and turmeric if using) and mix together with a dough hook for 10 minutes on low speed. Add the softened butter a small piece at a time while the mixer is running. Add the salt and continue mixing it until the dough is soft, shiny and it pulls out from the sides of the mixing bowl, about 10 minutes.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface. Knead lightly for 5 more minutes, stretching, folding and turning the dough. Lightly oil the bowl and place the dough back into the bowl. Lightly spray the dough surface with oil and cover with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise for 1 hour, or until it is doubled in size.

Meanwhile, mix the egg wash by beating together the leftover egg white, whole egg, water and sugar.

To shape the challah:

For a 3-braid Challah: divide the dough into three equal pieces. Roll each piece into a long snake, about 14 inches long. Lay the strands parallel alongside each other on a sheet of parchment paper. To braid, begin in the middle. From left to right, the strips are 1, 2 and 3. The positions stay the same though the strands will change positions. To begin braiding, lay 1 over 2, then 3 over 2 and start over 1 over 2 then 3 over 2 and keep going until you've reached the end. Pinch the ends together, then flip the entire loaf over so that you begin again in the middle. Repeat the sequence: 1 over 2 then 3

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over 2 and again until you've reached the end. Pinch the ends together and tuck under the loaf. the strips.

For 4-braid Challah: Divide the dough into four equal parts. Roll each piece into a long snake, about 12-14 inches long. Lay the strips parallel to each other, positioned with the ends facing you and pointing out. Pinch the ends at the top together and arrange the strands radiating out from the top. From left to right, the strands are numbered 1, 2 3 and 4. The sequence is: 4 over 2, 1 over 3 and 2 over 3.

Start by laying 4 over 2, and then 1 over 3, and then 2 over 3. Start again with the sequence until you've run out of dough. Pinch the ends together and tuck under.

To Bake:

Lightly spray a sheet of parchment paper with oil and place it oil side up on a sheetpan. Place the challah on the parchment and let it rest for 20 minutes. Egg wash and let it rest of another 20 minutes. Before baking, egg wash again and sprinkle with poppy seeds.

Bake in the preheated oven for 25 - 30 minutes, or until the challah is golden and shiny and firm (rotate halfway through baking). Internal temperature should be 185°F. Cool completely on a wire rack before slicing or breaking into it.