

What you need to make this homemade bread recipe

Here's what you need to make homemade bread from scratch – yeast, flour, salt and water. Yep, really, that's it!

- **Yeast** – my base recipe uses Rapid Rise or Instant Yeast which does not need to be dissolved in water. But it works just as well with normal yeast (“Active Dry Yeast” or just “dry yeast”) – you just need to change the order of the steps and dissolve the yeast in water first. The bread comes out exactly the same!
- **Best flour for homemade bread** – use bread flour if you can. Bread flour has more protein in it than normal flour which means more gluten, and this makes the dough more elastic and yields a more fluffy yet chewy texture inside the bread, as well as creating the big holes you see in the photos, like sourdough bread. However, this bread is still spectacular made with normal flour too!

Ingredients

- 3 cups (450g) flour , *bread or plain/all purpose (Note 1)*
- 2 tsp instant or rapid rise yeast (*Note 2 for normal / active dry yeast*)
- 2 tsp cooking / kosher salt , *NOT table salt (Note 3)*
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) very warm tap water , *NOT boiling or super hot (ie up to 55°C/130°F) (Note 4)*

DOUGH SHAPING

- 1 1/2 tbsp flour , *for dusting*

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How to make the world's easiest homemade bread – Artisan style!

Here are process steps with tips,

1. MAKE WET STICKY DOUGH

Mix together the flour, salt and yeast, then add warm water and mix. The “dough” will be very wet and sloppy, not kneadable at all – this is what you want!

2. RISE!

Cover with cling wrap then place it in a warm place (25 – 30°C / 77 – 86°F) for 2 hours. The dough will increase in volume by double or more, the surface will become bubbly and the dough will be wobbly, like jelly.

OPTIONAL – develop flavour: Once dough has risen, you can bake immediately. OR, for better flavour, refrigerate for a minimum of 8 hours, up to 3 days. Time = better flavour development.

I usually make this dough in the morning, refrigerate all day then bake in the evening. Or make the dough in the evening, refrigerate overnight and bake fresh in the morning! (10 – 12 hours in fridge). Beauty of this bread is that you can bake anytime!

No dutch oven? No problem! Just bake it on a tray – see the recipe notes.

3. PREHEAT OVEN & POT

30 minutes before dough has risen, or while refrigerated dough is coming to room temperature, place dutch oven (cast iron pot) in the oven to preheat at 230°C/450°F.

Hot oven + hot pot = bread rising boost!

4. SCRAPE DOUGH OUT

Scrape dough out of bowl onto floured work surface. It will be wet and sticky and that’s exactly what you want – because we will **not be kneading it!** In fact, you won’t even touch it with your hand.

PRO TIP: Dough handling and shaping technique devised to minimise addition of flour. Less flour = wetter dough = bigger air pockets, fluffier bread and more moist.

5. SHAPE THE DOUGH VERY ROUGHLY

Use a dough scraper or anything of similar shape (spatula, cake server, or large knife) to fold the sides in so it roughly resembles a round disc.

Don't get too hung up on the shaping – you'll deform it in the next step!! This step is mainly to deflate the dough.

6. FLIP DOUGH UPSIDE DOWN ONTO PAPER

Slide a large piece of baking / parchment paper next to the dough, then flip it upside down onto the paper using the scraper so the seams from the step above are face down, and you have the smooth side up.

Slide/push the dough into the centre, then briefly reshape it into a round or slightly oval shape.

7. PREPARE TO BAKE!

Remove very hot pot from oven, then use paper to pick up the dough and put it in the pot, and put the lid on.

8. BAKE!

Bake for 30 minutes with the lid on (this creates a steamer effect, allowing the bread to rise while it cooks before crust sets), then 12 minutes with the lid off to brown and crisp up the crust. The surface will crack – and you want this, for extra crispy ridges!! And it looks authentic, just like the Artisan

bread you buy at bakeries.

Cool for 10 minutes before slicing. This is important – to let the centre of the bread finish cooking (if you slice too early, it will seem a bit doughy. Patience was never my greatest virtue, so I learnt this first hand!)

Why this bread recipe works – and TIPS!

- **Loose, sticky dough** = easier to rise than firmer dough.
- **No kneading** = rough dough, but because the dough is so soft, it puffs up enough to “smooth out” the roughness.
- **Super forgiving dough** – too stiff, add water. Too wet, add flour. Dough not rising? Move it to a warmer place. Takes 45 minutes to rise or 5 hours? It will still work. As long as your dough is the same consistency as what you see in the video and you let it rise

to double the volume, this bread recipe will work **as long as the yeast is not past its expiry date!**

- **Why you need a preheated dutch oven** for no knead bread recipes – to create a steamy environment to give the bread a rise boost before the crust sets (which stops the bread from rising). Professional bakeries are equipped with steam ovens – the cast iron pot is the home method!
- **Don't have a dutch oven?** No problem! Recreate the steamy environment by placing hot water in a pan in the oven, and bake the bread on a tray.
- **Big holes in the crumb** – loose dough from less flour, high oven temp and preheated pot allows the yeast to give the bread a great rise boost, creating big air pockets. Also the use of bread flour rather than normal flour helps – you get less large holes using normal flour.
- **Bake immediately** if it's a bread emergency....
- ...but you'll be rewarded with **tastier bread** if you leave the dough 8+ hours in the fridge! *I normally make dough first thing in the morning (it takes 3 minutes!) then bake that night. Or make dough at night and bake in the morning. (~12 hrs in fridge for both scenarios)*
- **Why refrigerating the dough creates a better tasting bread** – because the fridge slows down the fermentation of the yeast (ie dough stops rising, if it kept rising it would kill the rising power of the yeast), allowing the enzymes in the yeast to do their work, transforming starch into sugar which creates a more flavourful bread. So we let the dough rise first, then refrigerate it

