

Secrets of confident cooking **BREAD**

Barney Desmazery shows how easy it is to make a good loaf of bread – and cut your shopping bills into the bargain
Photographs DAVID MUNNS

**Loads more exciting
bread recipes on-line!**

• Cheesy garlic bread • Welsh clay-pot bread • Granary bread • Cracked black pepper & figgy bread • Curried flatbread • Gluten-free sundried tomato bread • and lots more!

www.bbcgoodfoodme.com

*Bake your own
artisan-style loaf*

**Great
taste, great
value**

GOLDEN RULE

Remember the basic proportions. For a large everyday loaf you will need 500g of strong flour and 1 sachet (7g) of fast-action yeast, along with enough water to combine the two (which will be around 350ml), and that's it. With those basic ingredients and a little knowledge, the possibilities are endless.

UNDERSTANDING THE JARGON

• **KNEADING** To knead is to stretch the dough until it becomes elastic, which will help mix all the ingredients together and give the loaf texture. As the dough in the recipe (below) is a firm one, you knead it by stretching it with the heel of your hand and then folding it back on itself (you can watch a video of this at bbcgoodfood.com). A master baker once told me it's impossible to over-knead bread by hand. The dough should be kneaded until it's really springy and elastic, which will take at least 10 mins by hand or 3-4 mins in a bread machine with a dough hook.

• **RISING** Once the dough is made, the yeast is activated and needs time to work. One rule: the lower the temperature, the slower the rising. The dough is ready when it's doubled in size; in a warm room, this

will take about an hour, or 4-5 hours in the fridge. It should spring back slowly when pressed.

• **KNOCKING BACK** This means to knock all the air out of the dough so that the process can start again.

• **SHAPING** To mould the bread into the shape you want, one that will fit in the required tin.

• **PROVING** Proving is the second rise once the dough has been shaped. It's best to prove the bread at room temperature – you don't want to bake a cold loaf, because it will end up dense and heavy.

• **BAKING** Regardless of the sort of bread you make or how long it says to cook it, the bread is ready when you tap it on the base and it sounds hollow.

INGREDIENTS

• **FLOUR** Different bread flours will absorb slightly different amounts of liquid. Make sure you use a 'strong' or 'bread' flour. This has a higher proportion of protein, which is turned into gluten when kneaded and gives the bread its texture. Better-quality bread flours will be stoneground and unbleached.

• **YEAST** The easiest yeast to use is dried fast-action, which can be added straight to the flour. Normal dried and fresh yeast need to be dissolved in a little warm water before using. As a rule you will always need double the amount of fresh yeast to dried.

There is something magical about making bread – no other recipe gives you so much in return from such basic ingredients, which literally change in front of you. Making bread is a true kitchen pleasure that everyone should learn – even if you just use a breadmaker

Classic white loaf

CUTS INTO 16 slices • PREP 20 mins plus rising and proving • COOK 45 mins Easy P

Good for you, low fat

Instead of using a loaf tin, you could shape this into a large freeform loaf or individual rolls, and experiment with different flavours or glazes. This recipe can be easily doubled or tripled and the spare loaves can be frozen.

500g/1lb 2oz strong white flour, plus extra for dusting

7g sachet fast-action yeast

1 tsp salt

up to 350ml/12fl oz lukewarm water

a little sunflower oil, for greasing

1 Make the dough by tipping the flour, yeast and salt into a large bowl and making a well in the middle. Pour in most of the water and use your fingers or a wooden spoon to mix the flour and water together until combined to a slightly wet, pillowy, workable dough – add a splash more water if necessary. Tip the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for at least 10 mins until smooth and elastic. This can also be done in

a tabletop mixer with a dough hook. Place the dough in a clean oiled bowl, cover with cling film and leave to rise until doubled in size.

2 Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. Knock back the dough by tipping it back onto a floured surface and pushing the air out. Mould the dough into a rugby ball shape that will fit a 900g loaf tin and place in the tin. Cover with a clean tea towel and leave to prove for 30 mins. Dust the top of the loaf with a little more flour and slash the top with a sharp knife if you want. Bake the bread for 15 mins, then reduce the heat to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5 and continue to bake for 30 mins until the loaf sounds hollow when removed from the tin and tapped on the base. Leave the bread on a wire rack to cool completely. *The loaf will stay fresh in an airtight container for 3 days or can be frozen for 1 month.*

PER SERVING 111 kcalories, protein 4g, carbohydrate 24g, fat 1g, saturated fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 0.31g

IN A BREAD MACHINE...

All machines differ – follow manufacturer's instructions for a basic white loaf.

Now try

Use your classic dough to make these easy, delicious recipes



Ham and tomato Stromboli

SERVES 6 • PREP 30 mins plus rising
COOK 30 mins Easy P

The basic white dough makes a brilliant base for pizzas, and this Stromboli is the perfect way to make pizza to feed a crowd.

1 batch white bread dough
6 tbsp good-quality tomato sauce
3 wafer-thin ham slices, torn
100g ball mozzarella, grated
handful basil leaves
1 egg, beaten

1 Make the dough, leave to rise and knock back as stated. Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6.

2 On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out to a rough rectangle about 40 x 25cm. Spread the sauce over the dough, leaving a small border, and scatter over the ham, mozzarella and basil. Tuck the short sides in and roll up the long side like a Swiss roll. Lift onto a tray, seal-side down, and brush with the egg. Bake for 30 mins until puffed up and golden – don't worry if there are a few cracks. Leave to cool slightly, then serve sliced on a board.

PER SERVING 367 kcalories, protein 15g, carbohydrate 66g, fat 6g, saturated fat 3g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 1.32g

IN A BREAD MACHINE...

Use the bread machine to make the dough and then continue as stated.

these...



Red onion and rosemary focaccia

CUTS INTO 8 squares • PREP 25 mins plus rising • COOK 40 mins Easy

1 batch white bread dough
5 tbsp olive oil
2 large red onions, sliced
handful rosemary sprigs
1 tsp sea salt flakes

1 Make the basic dough, adding 2 tbsp olive oil and only a pinch of salt. While the dough is rising, cook onions in 1 tbsp olive oil for 5 mins until soft, then set aside.

2 When the dough has risen, knock it back and stretch it to fit an oiled Swiss roll tin about 25 x 35cm. Leave the dough to prove for about 20 mins.

3 Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Spread the onions over the dough and scatter with the rosemary. Press your fingers into the dough to make dimples, drizzle the remaining oil over and scatter over the salt, then bake for 30 mins until golden. Leave to cool, then serve cut or torn into squares.

PER SERVING 297 calories, protein 8g, carbohydrate 51g, fat 8g, saturated fat 1g, fibre 2g, sugar 3g, salt 1.13g

IN A BREAD MACHINE...

Use the bread machine to make the dough and then carry on as stated.

Malted walnut seed loaf

CUTS INTO 12 slices • PREP 20 mins plus rising and proving • COOK 45 mins Easy

Good source of essential fatty acids, calcium and iron

The ingredients for this delicious bread are different but the timings are the same as the basic loaf.

500g/1lb 2oz strong wholemeal flour

7g sachet fast-action yeast

1 tsp salt

up to 350ml/12fl oz warm water

100g/4oz mixed seeds (we used a mix of linseeds, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds)

50g walnut pieces

a little sunflower oil, for greasing

1 Make the dough with the flour, yeast, salt and water as stated in the first recipe, adding most of the seeds and all the walnuts as you knead the dough. Leave to rise in a clean bowl as stated, then knock back and shape into a large round. Roll the round in the remaining seeds, then lift the bread onto a tray to prove for about 30 mins until doubled in size.

2 Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. Bake the bread for 15 mins, then reduce the heat to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5 and continue to bake for 30 mins until the loaf sounds hollow when tapped on the base. Leave the bread on a cooling rack to cool completely. *The loaf will stay fresh in an airtight container for 3 days or can be frozen for 1 month.*

PER SERVING 172 calories, protein 7g, carbohydrate 28g, fat 4g, saturated fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 1g, salt 0.43g

Packed with goodness

