

No-Knead Bread

Hans Fugal

Delicious bread in 4 easy steps: mix, wait, shape, and bake.

Ingredients

15 ounces (about 3 cups) flour

¼ teaspoon yeast

1¼ teaspoons salt

10 ounces (1¼ cups) water

Equipment

A large bowl

A dutch oven or other oven-safe lidded container

About 24 hours before you want to eat your bread, combine ingredients and let sit covered for 18 hours.

On a floured surface, flatten the dough then fold in thirds (like a letter), then again in the other direction. Place dough seam down and cover with a large bowl.

Let rise 1–3 hours, until doubled in size or the dough is soft to the touch and doesn't spring back.

Preheat the oven and dutch oven to 500°+ (as hot as your oven goes). Plop the dough seam up into the dutch oven. Bake with the lid on for 20 minutes, then with the lid off for about 10 minutes, until the crust is caramel brown.

Remove from heat and allow to cool, if you can keep the ravenous butter slatherers at bay!

Makes one 1 pound round loaf.

Adapted from the recipe by Jim Lahey in the New York Times video at <http://tinyurl.com/35ua53>

No-Knead Bread Variations

Hans Fugal

Baking Stone

If you don't have a dutch oven, you can bake on a baking/pizza stone, some foil-covered bricks, or even a cookie sheet. If possible, cover with an inverted oven-safe bowl or stoneware for the first 20 minutes. The steam will really improve the crust.

Sourdough

Instead of $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon yeast, use a dallop of sourdough start. The second rise will probably take a little bit longer (3–4 hours).

Sandwich Loaf

If you're feeling unadventurous and would a more "traditional" sandwich loaf, you can also bake at 350° – 400° in a loaf pan for about 40–45 minutes.

Pizza Dough

Instead of baking the loaf, stretch or roll it out into a pizza shell and top with sauce, cheese, and toppings. Crank your oven up as high as it goes (unless it goes higher than 900° !) and bake on a pizza stone or cookie sheet until the crust and cheese are golden brown (about 10–15 minutes).

Summer

If your room temperature is closer to 90° than 70° you will notice that the bread rises much quicker. Reduce rise times as necessary. You may have to reduce the first rise to 12 hours or so, if the bread gets "raggy."

Refrigerator Bread

Instead of a 12–18 hours preferment on the counter, use 2 teaspoons yeast and preferment from 1 day to 2 weeks ahead of time in the fridge. The rise will take longer because the dough has to warm up, but overall the schedule is even more flexible.

Sourdough Start

Hans Fugal

I will happily share my start with you, just ask me for some. If you want to make your own, put 2 tablespoons whole wheat flour and 2 tablespoons water in a small container (a jam jar works well) and let sit 24–48 hours, until it gets bubbly. It may stink or get ugly, but don't worry.

Once bubbly, replenish with 1 part all-purpose flour and 1 part water. This is called feeding the start. Feed every 8 hours until it gets quite bubbly and has a sour and not unpleasant odor. When you feed your start, add 2–8 times its current volume. If the amount is getting to be unwieldy, throw away half (or more) before feeding it.

Sourdough start can go into the fridge for several weeks between uses. Feed your start and leave at room temperature 8–12 hours before you plan to use it in a recipe. If the recipe calls for a lot of start, you may need more than one feeding.

Always keep some start back for next time, but it doesn't have to be much. The residue in your start container is more than enough—just feed it 1 tablespoon flour and 1 tablespoon water and put it back in the fridge.

Sourdough start is acidic, like tomato sauce, so don't store it long-term in a metal container.

Sourdough Pancakes

Joe Pastry

2 cups sourdough start, left sitting out all night
1 egg
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon baking soda with 1 tablespoon water

Begin by putting your collapsed starter into a bowl.

Combine your soda and water.

Combine the rest of the ingredients in a bowl and mix well.

Fold the egg-oil-salt-sugar mixture into the starter, then pour in the soda-water mixture.

As the soda reacts with the lactic acid in the starter, the mixture will turn foamy.

Ladle the batter onto a hot, lubricated griddle and proceed as with any other pancake.

For a wheat pancake, simply combine a cup of white flour starter with a cup of 50-50 whole wheat flour-and-water mix (four ounces of each by weight) the afternoon or evening before, and leave it out until morning. The same thing will work with buckwheat, even rye if you want to try it — or any of those flours in combination. And that's not including all the various fruits and/or flavorings you can add.

This is the abridged version of the recipe explained, with pictures, at <http://joepastry.com/index.php?cat=86>.

Sourdough Biscuits

Unknown

3 cups sourdough start
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ cup melted butter plus additional melted butter for dipping.

Put the start and butter in a warm bowl.

Mix the flour, salt, sugar, and soda together. Fold into the batter. Stir only enough to wet the flour.

Turn onto a floured bread board or pastry cloth and knead for approximately ½ minute until you have a soft, just barely sticky dough.

Roll out with a floured rolling pin or pat out with your hands until the dough is approximately ½ inch in thickness. Using a biscuit cutter, cut out the biscuits being careful not to turn the cutter while cutting. Alternatively you can make drop biscuits.

Carefully lift the biscuits and dip them in melted butter. Place them close together on a 9-inch square pan and put the pan in a warm place for proofing for 30 minutes.

When the proofing period is over, place the pan in a preheated 375°–400° oven. Let the biscuits bake for 30–35 minutes. Serve them hot since the texture hardens when the biscuits are cool. To reheat, place in a moistened paper bag, close the bag, and then put it in the oven for 10 minutes at 350°.