

LEARNING MADE EASY



Bread Making

for
dummies[®]
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More than 85 recipes
from around the globe

Tips, tricks, and secrets to bake
sourdough or yeast breads

Healthier breads baked with
rye and whole-grain flours

**Wendy Jo Peterson,
MS, RDN**

Co-author of *Instant Pot Cookbook
For Dummies*



Bread Making

by Wendy Jo Peterson

**for
dummies®**
A Wiley Brand

Bread Making For Dummies®

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774, www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2020945961

ISBN 978-1-119-75809-9 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-119-75810-5 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-119-75811-2 (ebk)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Introduction

If you've recently found yourself curious about bread making, you're not alone! The age-old ritual of mixing flour, water, and yeast to create a delicious loaf of bread is growing in popularity.

And it's not surprising. Bread is part of the soul. In fact, some scientists believe bread making has been around for 30,000 years. From flatbreads to loaves, bread can easily be considered the most widely consumed food on Earth. Every culture has some type of bread as a staple in their diet.

You no longer need to pound grains between rocks to yield flour, but bread making still requires a bit more effort than going to a store and simply buying a loaf. Bread making is a labor of love, and the smell of hot bread fresh from the oven is just one of the many rewards of making your own. With this book as your guide, you'll be reaping the rewards in no time!

About This Book

Think of this book as your own personal bread-making coach! You start by getting familiar with some of the science behind bread making. Don't worry, there won't be a quiz and you don't have to memorize any technical terms or formulas, but understanding how just a few ingredients combine to make a delicious loaf of bread is important. I explain which flours and types of yeast are used to make different kinds of bread, and I show you some bread-making techniques that will come in handy. Finally, I help you stock your kitchen for your bread-making adventure, before offering more than 85 recipes to choose from.

This book is a reference, which means you don't have to read it from beginning to end and you don't have to commit it to memory. Instead, you can dip into these pages over and over again to find the information you need. The Table of Contents and Index will point you in the right direction.

Sidebars (text in gray boxes) and anything marked with the Technical Stuff icon (more on that later) can be skipped without missing the main point of the subject at hand.

Here are a few suggestions for getting the most out of the recipes in this book:

- » Read each recipe from top to bottom before you make your grocery list to ensure you have all the ingredients you need.
- » In the ingredients list, *milk* means whole milk and *butter* means unsalted butter; *all-purpose flour* means white, unbleached, all-purpose flour; and *warm water* means water between 100 and 110 degrees (it should feel warm to the touch, but not hot).
- » A “floured surface” is generally ½ cup of all-purpose flour on a flat surface. You can add more or less flour based on the stickiness of the dough. (If the dough is sticky, add a little more flour to the surface; if the dough is dryer, add a little less flour to the surface.)
- » If your house is cool or drafty, consider allowing the dough to rise in a cold oven with the light on. Cover the dough bowl with a tea towel, place it in a cold oven, and turn on the oven light. (Be sure to leave a note on the oven, so no one accidentally heats the oven with the dough inside!)
- » You can use either fresh or dried herbs. For easy substitution, just keep in mind that 1 teaspoon of dried is equivalent to 1 tablespoon of fresh.
- » Pay special attention to the techniques called for, whether hand kneading or using a stand mixer with a dough hook. Technique affects the end result, so be sure to follow the recipe.
- » If possible, use a scale to measure the ingredients instead of relying on measuring cups and spoons. Bread making is a science, and the more precise you can be with your measurements, the better.
- » Any recipes that are vegetarian are marked with the tomato icon (🍅) in the Recipes in This Book and the Recipes in This Chapter lists. (Most of the recipes in this book are, not surprisingly, vegetarian!)
- » The recipes in this book include information on how long you can store the bread. If you can't use the bread in the recommended timeframe, you can always place all or part of a loaf in a resealable plastic, freezer-safe bag and store it in the freezer for later use. To defrost, remove from the freezer and let the breads return to room temperature in the freezer bag, or place on a baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Toasting bread is also a great way to defrost without the wait.

Within this book, you may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

In writing this book, I made a few assumptions about you, the reader:

- » You've tasted homemade or bakery-style bread and you know what you're aiming to achieve.
- » You have basic knowledge of cooking, baking, and measuring.
- » You're patient — bread making definitely is *not* a quick process!

Icons Used in This Book

Throughout the book, you'll icons in the margin. Here's what each icon means:



TIP

The Tip icon marks information that can save you time and money as you're planning recipes to make, shopping for ingredients, and making bread.



REMEMBER

You don't have to commit this book to memory, but sometimes a piece of information is so important that I want you to remember it. When that happens, I flag it with the Remember icon.



WARNING

Think of the Warning icon as a big orange traffic cone in the middle of the sidewalk, warning you about a hole you don't want to fall into.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

Bread making is a science, and sometimes I wade into the weeds with technical information. When I do, I use the Technical Stuff icon. You can safely skip anything marked with this icon without missing anything essential about the topic at hand.

Beyond the Book

In addition to what you're reading right now, this product comes with a free access-anywhere Cheat Sheet that includes tips on how to form a round roll, the benefits of sourdough bread, and a bread baker's schedule you can follow if you like. To get this Cheat Sheet, go to www.dummies.com and type **Bread Making For Dummies Cheat Sheet** in the Search box.

Where to Go from Here

If you're brand-new to making breads, take your time and explore Part 1. If you've made bread before and you feel confident with the process, check out all the recipes in Part 2 — from savory to sweet to stuffed, you have more than 85 recipes to explore! If you're short on time, Part 3 offers ways to use up stale bread, my favorite sandwich ideas, and more.

I hope this book becomes your go-to bread-making guide, one that you flip through often when you crave freshly made bread. After all, everything is better with bread!

1

Getting Started with Bread Making

IN THIS PART . . .

Discover the science behind great bread.

Get acquainted with bread-making ingredients.

Understanding bread-making techniques.

Discover the old-world techniques of sourdough baking.

Plan a well-equipped kitchen and pantry.

- » Looking at how gluten, yeast, and salt combine to make bread
- » Measuring your ingredients precisely

Chapter **1**

Understanding the Basics of Bread Making

Bread is king, and bread making is equal parts art and science. In this chapter, you explore the science behind bread making and find out why a scale is so important for success.

If science wasn't your favorite subject in school, you may be tempted to flip ahead to the next chapter or just dive into a recipe, but especially if you're new to bread making, I urge you to give this chapter a read. It's only a few pages, and the information about how and why bread making works will not only help you understand what you're doing in the kitchen, but also give you the knowledge you'll need to figure out what went wrong if something does.

Donning Your Lab Coat: The Science of Bread

Science is *everything* in bread making. Each ingredient plays a specific role in the formation of bread. The good news is, this kind of science is fun! Plus, unlike in school, there won't be a test on Friday.

In this section, I fill you in on the main components of bread and the roles they play in making that delicious loaf you love.

Gluten

Gluten is the protein found in flour, and it's why the type of flour you use matters when you're baking, whether you're making cake or bread. (Turn to Chapter 2 for more on flour.) The forming of gluten is what gives rise, literally, to bread. Without gluten, your bread would feel like a brick.

When you add water to flour, it creates long, elastic strands from the gluten (known as the *gluten matrix*). Knead the flour strengthens those strands, which is important in giving your bread structure, so it can rise. (Chapter 3 explains the intricate details of kneading and stretching dough.)

Yeast

Yeast is another key ingredient of bread. Yeast is a living thing — it feeds off the carbohydrates in flour and expels carbon dioxide (a gas), which gets caught in the gluten matrix. That nifty matrix you formed while you were kneading holds the gas inside its chambers, and the dough rises. Magic!

Salt

Salt has an important role to play in bread making, and it's not just about flavor (although nothing is quite as tasty as a well-salted bread). Salt conditions the gluten, making it stronger and strengthening the elasticity of the strands. If you use too *little* salt, not only will your bread taste bland, but it will rise too quickly in an ill-formed matrix. If you use too *much* salt, it can kill the yeast.



REMEMBER

Bread making is all about balance, but don't fret! The recipes in this book have just the right balance of flour, yeast, and salt.

Heat

When you place your bread in the oven to bake, the gluten solidifies and holds its form. And when the baking is complete, the bread won't deflate. Instead, your well-formed gluten will hold its form as the bread cools and after it's sliced.



WARNING

Don't slice your bread too early! You'll probably be tempted to eat your bread straight out of the oven, but bread needs to fully cool before slicing or the texture will turn gummy and sticky.

Taking the Guesswork out of Baking Bread

Bread making is precise, and in order to have precision, you need a scale.



TIP

A food scale is one of the most important pieces of equipment when it comes to successful baking, and not just for breads. For around \$12, you can purchase a decent food scale that measures in grams.

As a culinary teacher, I do an experiment where I ask each of my students to measure out 1 cup of flour and then have them weigh it. Some students measure out 128 grams; some, 142 grams; and others, closer to 200 grams (if they've packed the flour in the cup). The correct weight of 1 cup of all-purpose flour is 125 grams. Being a few grams off can make a *huge* difference in the outcome of your bread.



REMEMBER

Although the recipes in this book include both the metric measurements (grams) and U.S. imperial volume measurements (cups and teaspoons), I recommend using a scale and following the metric measurements.

