
The Minimalist: The Secret of Great Bread: Let Time Do the Work, by Mark Bittman
Recipe: No-Knead Bread

<http://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/11376-no-knead-bread?ex=1166590800&en=2a3f2faa8425762f&ei=5070>

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Adapted from Jim Lahey, Sullivan Street Bakery

Time: About 1 1/2 hours plus 14 to 20 hours' rising

Play around with the parameters - ingredient amounts, time, temp

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour, + more for dusting [or try 2 1/2 C white + 1/2 C whole wheat]

1/4 teaspoon instant yeast

1 3/4 teaspoons salt [or 2 tsp]

Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed.

Method

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt.

Add 1 1/2 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky.

Cover bowl with plastic wrap.

Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70°.

2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles.

Lightly flour a work surface and [flour your hands for this part so the dough doesn't stick to you] place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice.

Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal [!]; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours.

When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 475° [or even 500° > 515°].

Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot* in oven as it heats. I think cast is iron best, but you can use enamel, Pyrex or ceramic, or aluminim. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. [at this point, sprinkle some cornmeal on the bottom of the pan !] Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 10 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

Yield: One 1 1/2 -pound loaf.

* Note: If using a clay pot (e.g., Romertopf), **don't** pre-warm the oven. You start it in a cold oven and then turn on the heat. But first, you need to presoak it 15 mins, then drain and pat dry. Optionally, you can then brush butter on bottom and sides. Before adding bread to pot, sprinkle cornmeal on surface and shake it around to coat bottom and sides. Baking time is 45 mins covered, then 10 mins uncovered.