

4-Ingredient Homemade Artisan Bread

Prep: 2–3 hours rise (or 12–72 hours cold ferment for best flavor) • Cook: 20–25 minutes

A rustic, bakery-style loaf with a chewy, slightly crisp crust and a soft, open crumb, delivering deep flavor from a long, cool fermentation.

Ingredients

- 3 1/4 cups (about 430 g) bread flour (spooned and leveled; plus more as needed for hands and pan)
- 2 teaspoons (about 6 g) instant yeast
- 2 teaspoons (about 9 g) coarse salt
- 1 1/2 cups (360 ml) water (cool/room temperature, about 70°F (21°C))
- as needed cornmeal (for dusting pan (optional))

Instructions

1. In a large ungreased mixing bowl, whisk together the bread flour, instant yeast, and coarse salt.
2. Pour in the cool water (~70°F/21°C) and mix with a spatula or wooden spoon until all flour is moistened; switch to your hands if needed. The dough will be sticky. Shape into a rough ball in the bowl.
3. Cover the bowl tightly and let the dough rise at room temperature for 2–3 hours, until nearly doubled with visible bubbles.
4. For best flavor, refrigerate the covered dough for at least 12 hours and up to 3 days; or proceed to the next step if baking right away.
5. When ready to bake, optionally dust a baking sheet with cornmeal. Lightly flour your hands, then shape the dough into either 1 round boule or 2 long loaves (about 9x3 inches each). Place on the prepared sheet.
6. Let the shaped dough rest while you preheat the oven to 475°F (246°C).
7. Just before baking, score the tops of the loaf/loaves. For a crispier crust, place a metal or cast-iron pan on the bottom oven rack; after the oven is preheated, carefully pour in boiling water to create steam, then quickly place the bread on the center rack and close the door.
8. Bake until golden brown, 20–25 minutes, and the loaves sound hollow when tapped on the bottom.

Tags: Bread, Artisan, Beginner Friendly, Yeast, 4 Ingredients, Baking
