

Pizza Dough

Source: Minor adaptation from Jim Lahey ("My Bread") via dinnerlovestory.com
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Measure 3 3/4 C All-purpose flour
1 t Sugar
1 t Maldon salt or 1/2 t fine salt
2 1/2 t Active dry yeast

into the bowl of a stand mixer, fitted with the dough hook attachment, and mix to combine.

Add 1 1/3 C Room-temperature water

in a steady stream to help the water become evenly distributed. Mix on medium speed until just blended and the mixture comes together as a ball. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured cutting board and divide into the number of portions you plan to use (see notes below). Shape each portion into a ball and cover (an airtight cake carrier works well for this). If you prefer, the dough can be left to rise, covered, in the bowl you mixed it in and you can portion the dough after it has risen. Let the dough sit at room temperature until it has more than doubled in volume, at least 2 to 3 hours.

Prepare your baking sheet by lining it with foil and then parchment.

Lightly flour your surface and roll the dough out thinly (about a 1/8-inch) or to taste. Transfer the rolled out dough to the baking sheet and allow the dough to rest for about 30 minutes, until the surface of the dough goes from smooth and flat to bumpy.

Pre-heat the oven to 500°F for 20 minutes (the oven must be HOT).

Brush the outer rim of the dough (about 1-inch wide) with oil. Spread with sauce until it just meets the oiled perimeter and add your toppings of choice. Bake on the lowest rack of the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, keeping a close eye after 10 minutes to ensure the cheese or crust do not burn. Leave the pizza to rest for about 5 minutes before slicing.

Notes:

- Some of the all-purpose flour can be replaced with whole wheat. I usually do 1 C of whole wheat flour.
- 1 recipe of pizza dough makes enough for a hungry family of four (edible dividends likely).
- Portions (thin-crust pizzas):

- 2: large pizzas (each will almost fill a ~18" x 12" baking sheet)
- 5: good sized personal pizzas for adults or older children/teens
- 10: perfect for young kids (pizzas will be approximately 7-inches) and for making single-serving sized calzones
- Allowing the dough to rest after rolling is key for a crust that is crisp, light, and airy. If you skip this step, you may find the crust is dense. If time is of the essence, skimping a little on the first rise to allow for the second is preferable.
- Best results are achieved by baking one sheet at a time. If baking two sheets at a time, rotate them so that each gets to spend about half the time in the lower part of the oven.
- If the crust is starting to cook much more quickly than the toppings and you are concerned about burning, move it higher up in the oven. You could also finish the top off using the broiler but do not take your eyes off the pizza to prevent burning. If the top is cooking faster than the bottom and you are concerned about burning, tent some foil over the pizza.
- Banking time (advance prep for shortcuts to more pizza):
 - Measure the dry ingredients into a jar or container with a lid so that you need only add water and mix the next time around.
 - The dough can be made 3 days ahead. Cover well and refrigerate. Remove from fridge about 3.5 hours before you will be ready to roll it out and leave the dough out at room temperature to rise.
 - Freeze the dough after portioning and shaping into balls. Take out as many portions as needed and allow enough time to thaw and rise (about 5 hours). I regularly leave it out for 10 hours.
 - Freeze the dough after rolling and allowing for the resting time. The pizza dough can be dressed and baked from frozen.
 - Go all the way and add all the toppings to the pizza dough before you freeze it.
 - Dough can be frozen for up to 3 months.

Red Pizza Sauce

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Stir together

- 1 Bottle of passata
- 1 t Sugar
- 1 t Maldon salt or 1/2 t fine salt

Spread on pizza and add toppings of choice. Freeze leftovers in ice cube tray for future use.

White Pizza Sauce

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Whip together

- 2/3 C Whipping cream
- 1/2 t Maldon salt or 1/4 t fine salt
- Parmesan (to taste)

Spread on pizza and grate over

Add toppings of choice.

Some ideas for toppings after you have dressed the dough with the sauce and mozzarella:

- Basil Bianca: for each personal-sized pizza, whip 1/3 C whipping cream until soft peaks will hold their shape. Stir in 1/4 t Maldon salt or 1/8 t fine salt, 3/4 C basil leaves (finely chopped); and 1/2 clove grated garlic. Sprinkle over 1/4 C grated Parmesan.
- Bacon, pineapple, finely diced shallot, feta, and dried oregano. Once the pizza is out of the oven, had its 5 minutes to cool, and has been sliced, add slivers of ripe avocado seasoned with salt and pepper (or mash it up with a fork and eat it as a dip).
- Roasted sweet potato and butternut with caramelised onions, goat cheese, and thyme.
- Bacon and Montreal smoked meat.