

No-Knead Artisan Dutch Oven Bread

Ingredients:

- 3 ½ cups (420 g) bread flour
 - ½ teaspoon instant yeast
 - 1 ¼ teaspoons fine sea salt
 - 1 ⅓ cups (320 ml) water, room temperature
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Instructions:

1. Prepare the Dough:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the bread flour, instant yeast, and sea salt.

Add the water and stir with a wooden spoon or dough whisk until a shaggy, sticky dough forms. Ensure no dry flour remains. Use your hands to work in any of the flour that hasn't been incorporated. Optional: do a series of stretch and folds every 30 minutes or so during the rise to help with building strength in the dough and making for a taller loaf.

2. First Rise (Bulk Fermentation):

Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap or a clean kitchen towel. Allow the dough to rise at room temperature until doubled in size, about **3 hours**.

Optional for improved flavor: After the initial rise, re-cover the dough and refrigerate overnight or up to **3 days**. When ready to bake, proceed with shaping straight from the refrigerator (no need to bring to room temperature).

3. Shape the Dough:

Using a wet hand, fold the dough over itself toward the center. Rotate the bowl slightly and repeat, continuing around the bowl until the dough tightens and forms a loose ball.

4. Bench Rest:

Turn the dough out onto a sheet of lightly floured parchment paper, seam side down. Dust the top with flour. Let the dough rest, covered with a lightly greased piece of plastic wrap at room temperature for **45 minutes, or until puffy**.

5. **Preheat the Oven and Dutch Oven:**

While the dough rests, place a Dutch oven (4- to 6-quart capacity) with its lid inside the oven. Preheat the oven to **450°F (230°C)** and heat the Dutch oven for at least **30 minutes**.

6. **Bake the Bread:**

Carefully remove the hot Dutch oven from the oven. Using the parchment paper, transfer the dough into the Dutch oven. Cover with the lid and bake for **30 minutes**.

7. **Finish Baking:**

After 30 minutes, remove the lid and continue baking uncovered for an additional **15 to 20 minutes**, or until the crust is deeply golden brown and the loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

8. **Cool the Bread:**

Remove the bread from the Dutch oven by lifting it out with the parchment paper. Transfer to a wire rack and cool completely, at least **1 hour**, before slicing.

Notes:

- Use a wet hand to handle the dough during shaping to prevent sticking without adding extra flour.
- For a crisper crust, you may remove the parchment paper during the last 10 minutes of baking if desired.
- Cold-fermented dough (refrigerated overnight) will develop a slightly tangier, deeper flavor profile.