



BRIXTON BREWERY TEST KITCHEN

EASY BREEZY LOCKDOWN BREAD DOUGH

Thanks so much for buying this yeast and, by doing so, raising money for the Norwood and Brixton Foodbank (which you can find out all about online).

OK, we won't say you absolutely can't go wrong with this bread dough recipe, but it's pretty forgiving. Bread dough, like beer, depends a lot on a semi-mystical alchemy – the beautiful chemistry between different ingredients coming together to form something so much more magical than each of its pretty basic parts. Sometimes it takes a bit of time to get it right.

Here at BB we have the benefit of Roberto, our delivery driver, and the unsurpassed master of home bread making. What Roberto doesn't know about bread isn't worth knowing. Though like the best experts, he modestly insists he's still learning. Anyway, the recipe here isn't officially sanctioned by Roberto because he goes by percentages, proportions and experience, but his wisdom and technique is very much a part of it.



INGREDIENTS:

10g (approx. one not-quite-full tablespoon if you don't have a small weighing scale) brewers yeast

(note: you can eek out one extra batch using this recipe if you reduce quantity to 7.5g yeast which is what you get in a supermarket sachet – go for a longer rise time if you do this but it still works)

25g (2 tablespoons) granulated sugar

500ml (2 cups) lukewarm water

15g (approx. 1 tablespoon) salt

750g (6 cups) flour – you can use a white or whole wheat or a mix of both. Two parts white to one part whole wheat is a good start to experiment with mixing. Strong white bread flour is great if you can get it, but Team BB test bakers can report success using regular flour that was best before 2016 so give it a go!

30-60ml (1-2 tablespoons) olive oil

METHOD:

1. In a mixing bowl, add the yeast and sugar to warm water and whisk until dissolved. Leave to stand for about 5 minutes. Again, a Team BB test bakers has also succeeded just throwing the dry yeast right in the mix. This crazy anarchist (brewer Francesco) also lets his dough rise for a very long time – up to several days in the fridge. So make of this what you will and go your own way.
2. Add the flour one scoop at a time, mixing well after each addition. About halfway through, add the salt and continue mixing well.
3. Get in there with your hands when it gets too hard with the spoon. Form the dough into a well-combined, sticky ball (if it seems dry, add a bit of extra water; different types of flour absorb water differently so it can take a bit of artful guesswork here).
4. Dust your hands with flour and pour a tablespoon of the olive oil on your countertop and spread it around for a kneading surface (you can also use flour, but that can dry things out too much).
5. Place your dough on the counter and start kneading it well until it is smooth and a bit elastic, which can take up to 10 minutes.
6. Grease your mixing bowl with the final tablespoon of olive oil, put the dough in the bowl and flip it to coat it with oil on both sides. Cover the bowl with a tea towel or plastic bag/wrap and leave to rise at room temperature until doubled in size (approx. 90-120 mins).
7. When risen, punch it down and knead briefly to get the air out of it. It's now ready to shape, or put in a well-oiled loaf tin for baking. Divide in two and shape away (if you're not using a tin, make sure you put down some oil or flour on the surface of what you shape and bake it on).
8. Cover and leave to rise until doubled again – 60-90 minutes.

BAKING:

Pre-heat oven to 190c

Put a couple of ice cubes on the lowest baking tray or a glass of water on the floor of the oven to add humidity (which helps form a crust).

Bake for about 25-30 minutes until lightly browned.