

Making Bread at Home

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Making Bread at Home

Fluffy, light biscuits; a golden brown loaf; tender light, muffins; crisp, crunchy corn breads — these are yours for following a few simple rules. Breadmaking is a science as well as an art. Experience helps, but it is easy for anyone to become a good breadmaker, if she learns the rules.

Since bread is usually eaten at every meal, it becomes a very important source of body-building materials. Whole wheat offers the most, bread made from enriched flour almost as much, and that made of unenriched white flour, the least. Six slices of bread or the equivalent in biscuits or other breads contain about $\frac{1}{5}$ of the daily amount of protein needed, as well as $\frac{1}{6}$ of the amount of energy. Our practice of "refining" the wheat as we grind it takes away most of the minerals and vitamins. Enriched flour has a large part of these minerals and vitamins restored.

Helpful Rules for Success in Breadmaking

Measure accurately: Sift flour before measuring. Use standard measuring cups and spoons. Be sure that all measurements are level.

Assemble equipment and ingredients: If everything is assembled before starting to mix the bread, it will be easy to do it quickly and well.

Yeast Breads

What Yeast Shall I Use? Compressed yeast is moist, acts quickly, does not keep well. It must be kept cool and should be used within a week. Bread may be made in 4 to 8 hours with it. Dry yeast is available in granular or cake form and keeps for weeks without refrigeration. Granular yeast is quick, but cake form is slower.

What Liquid Shall I Use? Milk is the most nutritious liquid and bread made from it keeps fresh longer than when water or potato water is used. Whey may also be used. Eggs added to the liquid make a slightly lighter bread.

What Method Shall I Use? The straight dough method is best when compressed or granular yeast is used. The completed dough is made up at the first mixing and the dough is set to rise at 80° to 85°. The sponge method is usually used when dry cake yeast is available.

Hard and Soft Wheat

Most Virginia wheat is "soft wheat," which makes a flour low in gluten. It is usually designated as pastry flour, but can be made into very satisfactory bread if these things are understood:

1. Soft wheat requires less liquid than hard.
2. Dough should be made slightly stiffer when soft wheat is used.
3. During first rising, soft wheat does not stiffen up as hard wheat does.
4. Dough rises more quickly from soft wheat than from hard wheat.
5. Soft wheat dough does not stand as much handling as hard. If kneaded too long, the gluten is injured.
6. Soft wheat dough should be allowed to double its bulk but no more.

Common Bread Troubles

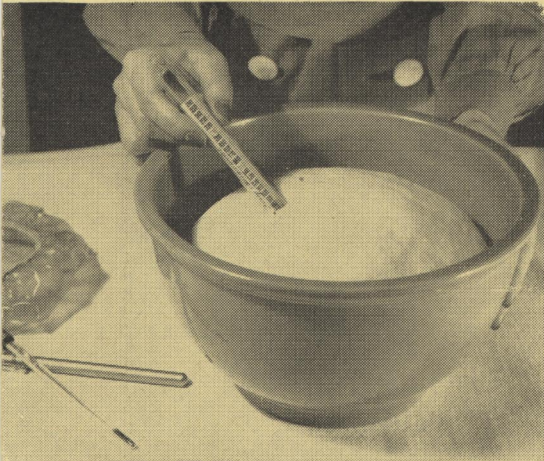
Defect	Possible Remedy
Sour or poor flavored	Fresh yeast and flour. Care in rising and baking at correct temperature.
Soggy or heavy	Slower rising and baking.
Ropey	Scald out bowl, flour container and utensils. Add 1 tablespoon vinegar to liquid.
Coarse textured	More kneading, more flour, shorter rising, hotter oven.

Loaf Bread — Dough Method (Makes 4 loaves)

- 2 to 4 yeast cakes
- 4 cups milk or other liquid
- 4 teaspoons salt
- 4 tablespoons sugar or syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fat
- 12 or more cups enriched flour.
(Less flour and yeast are needed for hard wheat flour.)

Scald milk; add sugar, salt, and fat. Let cool; then add to yeast. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ the flour and beat until smooth. Add more flour until dough does not stick to side of bowl. Knead slightly on floured board until elastic. Put into greased bowl; grease on top and cover.

Let double in bulk. Fit into greased bread pans. Let rise in pans until light. Bake 50 to 60 minutes at 400°.



The best temperature for rising bread is
80° to 85° F.



Loaf Bread — Sponge Method (Makes 4 loaves)

- 1 yeast cake
- 2 cups lukewarm milk or water
- 4 cups flour (enriched)

Soften yeast in liquid. Add flour for sponge. Cover and let stand overnight in warm place (75-80°). In the morning add:

- 2 cups lukewarm milk or water
- 4 teaspoons salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup melted fat
- 4 tablespoons sugar or syrup
- About 8 cups flour ($\frac{1}{2}$ may be whole wheat)

Place on floured board to knead. With fingers curved, lift edge of dough and fold toward you. Push

Punch down when light and doubled in bulk.

down with palms of hands. Continue folding and pressing until dough springs back. Let rise until doubled in bulk. Punch down and let rise again before shaping. Shape with hands into long roll and place in pan, smooth side up. Let rise in pans in warm place until doubled in bulk. When loaves are almost risen, heat oven (400°). To prevent loaves from forming a hard crust, it may help in some ovens to place a cup or pan of water in oven. Place pans on lower rack 1 inch or more apart. After 10 minutes, reduce heat to 350°. Turn in oven, if loaves bake unevenly. Bake 50 minutes to one hour or more, according to size of loaves.

Ready
for
the
Oven



Rolls and Variations

Bread dough may be used to make rolls — a practical plan when both loaf bread and rolls are desired. If rolls alone are made, a slightly softer dough may be used and twice as much sugar and fat may be added. Eggs are frequently added to make rolls somewhat lighter (one egg for each cup of milk). Roll dough does not have to be kneaded as loaf dough does.

Refrigerator Rolls

Use either of the bread recipes; let dough rise once, punch down, grease well over the top, and place in refrigerator or a cold place in a tightly covered bowl. The dough will rise some, even if kept cold, so punch down every day until it is all used. Dough is best if used in 2 or 3 days.

Cinnamon Rolls

Use standard bread dough. Mix a paste using these proportions:

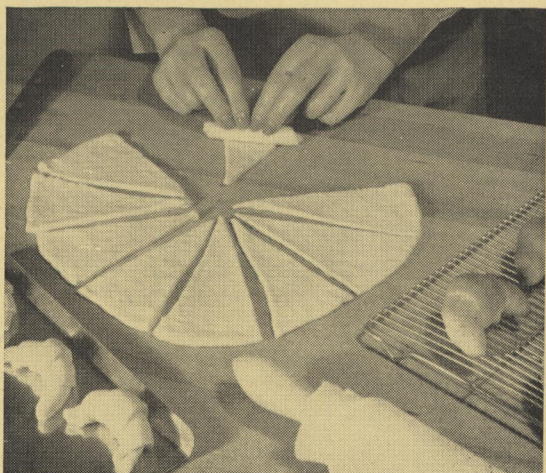
1 tablespoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons butter

Nuts, raisins or dried apples, if desired.

Roll dough out thin and spread this paste over the dough. Roll up as a jelly roll. It helps to fold the last 2 inches of dough up over the roll rather than rolling the entire mass to the edge. This also prevents spilling out part of the paste mixture. Cut in 1-inch pieces with scissors or a sharp knife. Place slices, cut side down, on a greased pan. Grease over the top; let rise to double the size and bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes or until brown.



Quick Breads

General Rules for Making Quick Breads

1. For each cup of flour allow two teaspoons of most baking powder.
2. If the recipe calls for sweet milk, it is easy to change to buttermilk if you know this simple rule: use $\frac{1}{2}$ as much baking powder as the recipe calls for and $\frac{1}{4}$ as much soda as baking powder. (Too much soda makes a bitter, yellow product.)
3. For each egg added, use $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon less of baking powder.
4. Use about $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of soda to neutralize a cup of buttermilk (depending on acidity).

Help for Some Quick-Bread Troubles

When biscuits are heavy and compact, with tough crust, the cause may be:

Overmixing or overkneading of dough.
Not enough baking powder.
Oven not hot enough.
Too much flour worked in while kneading.
Not enough shortening.

When biscuits are shapeless, cause may be:

Too much liquid, giving too soft dough.
Uneven rolling or patting out of dough.
Careless cutting or placing on baking pan.

When muffins are heavy, cause may be:

Overmixing or too slow mixing.
Too much flour.
Not enough leavening.
Oven not hot enough.

When muffins have sharp peaks or knobs on top and tunnels inside, the cause may be:

Overmixing of batter.

Make and Bake Quick Breads Quickly

Standard Biscuit Recipe — Buttermilk

2 cups flour	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	3 tablespoons shortening
2 teaspoons baking powder	1 cup buttermilk

Sift flour, salt, baking powder, and soda. Cut in shortening. Add buttermilk all at once. Roll $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick. Bake 12 to 15 minutes in hot oven (450°).

Standard Biscuit Recipe — Sweet Milk

2 cups flour
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons shortening

4 teaspoons baking powder
⅔ to ¾ cup milk

Sift dry ingredients. Cut in shortening. Stir in milk and turn on floured board. Roll and cut. Bake at 475° 10 to 12 minutes.

Biscuits may be covered with wax paper and placed in icebox for several hours before baking.

Cinnamon Rolls

Use plain biscuit dough. Roll out thin, brush with melted butter, and sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Nuts, raisins, or dried apples may be added. Roll up (as for jelly roll), cut in 1-inch slices; place on greased pan. Bake 20 minutes in hot oven.



Biscuits or bread dough may be used for attractive variations.

Biscuit Mix — Buttermilk

(Change for sweet milk according to general rules)

Time may be saved by making up a quantity of biscuit mix at a time. Keep it in a cool place. To use it, simply add milk.

8 cups flour
8 teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons soda
4 teaspoons salt

1 cup fat

Muffins

2 cups flour
3 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon salt
2 eggs

2 tablespoons melted fat
¾ to 1 cup milk

Melt fat in muffin tins. Sift dry ingredients. Mix in other things quickly. Have oven hot (425°) and pans hot. Bake 10 to 15 minutes.

Muffin batter will do for waffles if the amount of fat is doubled.

Score for Judging Breads

Appearance (even, uniform shape, size, and color).....	25
Texture (light, tender crumb; does not pack when pressed)	30
Crust (tender, light, brown, smooth; not thick or hard)	10
Flavor (nutty, sweet taste; pleasant odor)	35

Corn Breads

Much of the fame of early southern cooking came from the crusty, hot corn breads. These breads were all made from water-ground white corn meal and the same results cannot be obtained from bolted meal or yellow meal. Like other grains, corn is most important as an energy-yielding food. And also like other grains, it loses some of its best food values in the ordinary milling processes. "Old process meal," or water-ground meal, keeps more of its protein, its minerals and its vitamin B than "bolted" meal does. White meal has no vitamin A, C, D, and G, but yellow meal has both A and G.

Virginia Corn Muffins

2 cups corn meal	2 tsp. baking powder	2 eggs
2 cups buttermilk	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup melted fat
(more if needed)	1 teaspoon sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

Sift meal with dry ingredients. Add milk and eggs and beat with rotary egg beater. Have greased muffin tins very hot. Add batter to hot rings and bake in hot oven about 25 minutes.

Fluffy Batter Bread

1 cup buttermilk	2 tbsp. melted butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda
1 cup sweet milk	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup corn meal, sifted	2 teaspoon baking powder
2 eggs	with	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

Beat eggs with the sweet and buttermilk. Melt butter in pan bread is to be baked in. Have oven **hot** before adding drying ingredients to liquids. Have greased pan **hot** before adding batter bread. Put at once into hot (450°) oven and bake until firm in center.

Corn Meal Waffles

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups meal	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon soda	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooking oil or
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour	1 teaspoon salt	melted fat
2 eggs	2 tbsp. baking powder	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups butter-
		milk

Sift salt and meal together. Beat eggs; add buttermilk and shortening. Combine with sifted meal and salt. Sift flour, soda, and baking powder together and add to other mixture. Cook immediately.

Crackling Bread

1 cup cracklings, diced	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup wheat flour	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups corn meal	1 cup sour milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda

Cracklings are the pieces of meat remaining after the lard has been rendered from the pork. Mix and sift together the dry ingredients. Add the milk, stir in cracklings. Form into oblong cakes and place in greased baking pan. Bake in hot oven 400° for 30 minutes.