

Easy Homemade Bread

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 c. lukewarm water
- 1 T. active dry yeast
- ¼ c. honey or sugar
- 2 t. salt
- 2 T. oil or melted butter
- 2 T. kefir, sour cream, or plain yogurt (*optional but adds fluffiness*)
- ½ c. active sourdough (*optional but we like the taste*)
- 5-7 c. flour (*depends on whether you added the kefir and/or sourdough*)

Directions:

Combine the water, yeast, and honey or sugar in a large bowl. Let sit for 5-10 minutes or until foamy. *If it doesn't foam up then your yeast may be bad and you may need to try again with fresh yeast.*

Add the remaining ingredients except for the flour. Stir well to combine.

Add 4 cups of flour and mix well. I like to do this in my stand mixer, but it could be done by hand as well.

Add the flour, ½ c. at a time, until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl. It should be smooth, stretchy, and slightly sticky. If it is very sticky you may need to add a little more flour.

Continue to mix with a dough hook or knead by hand for 5-10 minutes.

Next, add some oil to the bowl and roll the dough ball around to coat all sides.

Cover and let rise for 1-2 hours or until double in size. *You can put it in the cold oven with the light on to help it rise better.*

Thoroughly grease 2 9x5 loaf pans... *you can add some parchment paper to the bottoms and sides if you like but it is not necessary. I also like to use a long pan like [this](#) sometimes.*

Punch down the dough and divide it into two. Shape your dough and place it into the loaf pans. *This can also be shaped into rolls - we make about 12 medium-sized rolls per loaf.*

Cover and let rise 45 minutes to an hour or until slightly above the sides of your pan.

Preheat your oven to 425.

I like to brush the tops of the dough with butter and make a slit down the centers with a razor, but it is not completely necessary to do this.

Once the oven is preheated I place the loaves in and cut the temperature down to 350. Bake for 3-35 minutes.

Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes and then remove from pans to wire racks.

You can brush with additional butter at this point if you like.

Let cool for at least 10-15 minutes before slicing. *We store the sliced bread in Ziploc baggies on the counter and it is gone quickly but you could put it in the refrigerator if needed.*

Make Ahead:

This bread dough is even better if you let it sit in the fridge for a day or two after the first rise. Just make sure to use a large container and cover it well! You can shape it before you refrigerate to make things a little easier.

When ready to bake just pull it out and let it sit on the counter for an hour or two until doubled and then bake as directed above.

For Honey Oat Bread:

Add 2 T. honey to the bread dough and sprinkle with oats after shaping for the final rise. *You may want to brush a little water on the dough to get the oats to stick a little better.*