

# Baguette and French Bread with 100% Freshly Milled Wheat

*Two recipes in one—same dough, different shaping.*

4.50 from 8 votes

Prep	Bake	Yield	Notes
2 hr 30 min	25 min	3 baguettes <i>or</i> 2 French loaves	100% freshly milled hard white wheat. Kamut works; active dry yeast allowed (longer rise).

## Ingredients (1x batch)

### Flour

5 cups freshly milled hard white wheat flour (mill about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cups wheat berries).

### Liquids & Add-ins

- 2 cups warm water
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp cane sugar (*or* honey)
- 1 Tbsp instant yeast (*active dry* also works; allow longer rise)
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- $2\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt

## Approx. Metric Equivalents (guideline)

Item	Metric (approx.)	Notes
Warm water	~480 mL	2 US cups
Sugar / honey	~22–25 mL	1.5 Tbsp (volume)
Instant yeast	~9–10 g	1 Tbsp
Olive oil	15 mL	1 Tbsp
Salt	~12–13 mL	2.5 tsp (volume; weight varies by type)
Freshly milled flour	~625–700 g	5 cups; whole wheat density varies—mix to a <i>tacky</i> dough

Flour weights are approximate; freshly milled whole wheat absorbs differently. Add flour gradually and stop when dough is soft and tacky.

## Method

1. **Build a sponge (15–20 min).** In a mixer bowl or large bowl, combine: warm water, sugar (or honey), and about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups of the freshly milled flour. Stir smooth, then add yeast and mix in. Let stand until slightly risen and bubbly (15–20 minutes).  
*No bubbles? Your yeast may be inactive—start over with fresh yeast.*
2. **Mix the dough.** Add olive oil, salt, and ~2 more cups flour. Mix to combine. Then add *just enough* additional flour, a little at a time, until the dough begins to clean the bowl sides yet remains *tacky* to the touch.
3. **Knead to develop gluten.** Knead in mixer for ~9 minutes (or by hand 15–20 minutes) until smooth, elastic, and still *tacky*, not dry.  
*Avoid over-flouring; too much flour yields a dense crumb.*
4. **First rise (bulk ferment).** Place dough in a lightly oiled bowl (or leave in mixer bowl), cover, and rise until doubled, about 30–45 minutes.
5. **Divide & pre-shape.** Turn the still-tacky dough onto a lightly floured surface. For **baguettes**: divide into 3 equal pieces. For **French bread loaves**: divide into 2 equal pieces. Lightly flour or wet hands if needed.
6. **Final shaping.** For each piece, roll into a rectangle about 10 in wide and 6–7 in tall. Fold the top third to the center and seal the seam. Fold again to the edge and seal. Roll into a cylinder: **baguette** = long and slender; **French bread** = slightly shorter and plumper.
7. **Proof.** Place seam-side down on baguette/French bread pans, or on a floured tea towel (*couche*) with pleats between loaves. Cover and rise until nearly doubled (~30 minutes).
8. **Preheat & steam.** While loaves proof, preheat oven to 425°F. Just before baking, score each loaf (diagonal slashes) and brush or mist with water (egg wash yields a darker, shinier crust).
9. **Bake.** Bake at 425°F for 10 minutes, then reduce to 375°F and bake about 15 minutes more, or until an internal temperature of 190°F is reached.
10. **Cool & serve.** Transfer to a rack and cool about 10 minutes. Tear apart or slice with a bread knife.

## Shaping Guide & Tips

**Baguette vs. French Bread:** Same dough—*shape* sets the style. Baguettes are longer and slimmer; French loaves are a bit shorter and fuller.

**Flour choice:** Hard white wheat gives the lightest result. If needed, use a blend of  $\frac{2}{3}$  hard red wheat +  $\frac{1}{3}$  soft white wheat.

**Crust control:** For a crustier crust, extend the initial 425°F phase by 1–2 minutes (ovens vary—experiment).

**Active dry yeast:** Works fine; expect slightly longer rise times.

**Hydration matters:** Freshly milled flour absorbs more. Keep the dough *tacky*; resist adding excess flour.

*Scaling:* Ingredients listed for 1x. For 2x or 3x, multiply quantities accordingly.