

New York-Style Bagel Recipe

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Overview

This easy homemade New York-Style Bagel recipe uses basic pantry ingredients to make classic, chewy bagels with a soft, shiny crust. The dough is boiled, then baked for authentic New York texture and flavor. Same-day method; ready in about 2 hours.

At a Glance

Yield	Makes 8 medium-sized bagels
Prep Time	20 minutes
Cook Time	20 minutes
Additional Time	1 hour 20 minutes (rise and rest)
Total Time	About 2 hours

Ingredients

Bagel Dough

- 2 teaspoons (6 g) active dry yeast
- 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (19 g) granulated sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (300 ml) warm water, plus up to $\pm \frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 ml) more as needed
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (440 g) bread or high-gluten flour
(*up to an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ cup / 60 g for kneading*)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 g) fine salt

Optional Toppings

Caraway seeds, cinnamon sugar, coarse salt, minced fresh garlic, minced fresh onion, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, everything bagel seasoning, or any combination you like.

Instructions

1. **Proof the yeast.** In a small bowl, combine 1/2 cup (120 ml) of the warm water (about 105–115°F / 40.5–46°C) with the sugar and yeast. Do not stir for 5 minutes. Then stir to dissolve completely.
2. **Make the dough.** In a large bowl, mix flour and salt. Make a well and pour in the yeast mixture. Add 1/3 cup (80 ml) warm water and begin mixing, adding the remaining scant 1/2 cup (about 100 ml) as needed to form a moist, firm dough. Depending on flour, humidity, and altitude, you may need an additional 2–4 tablespoons up to about 1/4 cup (60 ml).
3. **Knead.** Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead about 10 minutes, working in as much flour as needed to achieve a smooth, elastic, and fairly stiff dough.
4. **First rise.** Place in a lightly oiled bowl, turn to coat, cover with a damp towel, and let rise in a warm place for about 1 hour, until doubled. Punch down and rest 10 minutes.
5. **Divide and pre-shape.** Divide into 8 equal pieces. Shape each into a taut round by cupping your hand in a “C” shape and rotating against the unfloured work surface to create surface tension.

6. **Shape bagels.** Dust a finger with flour, poke a hole through the center of each round, then gently stretch the hole until it is about one-third the diameter of the bagel. Place on a lightly oiled or parchment-lined sheet.
7. **Rest and preheat.** Cover with a damp towel and rest 10 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 425°F / 220°C (Gas Mark 7) and bring a large pot of water to a gentle boil.
8. **Boil.** Reduce the boil to a simmer. Using a slotted spoon or skimmer, lower in as many bagels as fit comfortably without crowding. They will float quickly. Simmer 1 minute, flip, and simmer 1 minute more. For an extra-chewy, classic New York texture, boil 2 minutes per side.
9. **Top.** While still tacky from the water, add desired toppings. (Alternatively, brush with a light egg wash before topping, if you prefer extra sheen.)
10. **Bake.** Transfer to an oiled or parchment-lined baking sheet and bake 20–25 minutes until uniformly golden brown (start checking at 20).
11. **Cool (a little) and serve.** Cool on a wire rack for a few minutes—or slice warm and add a generous schmear of cream cheese.

Serving Suggestions

- **Classic Schmear:** Plain or flavored cream cheese.
- **Butter or Butter & Jam:** Simple and great, especially with high-quality butter.
- **Lox Bagel:** Cream cheese, lox, tomato, red onion, cucumber, and capers.
- **Avocado:** Toasted bagel with smashed avocado; add bacon if desired.
- **Egg & Cheese:** Deli-style egg-and-cheese (with bacon optional); season and dress to taste.

Notes

Water Amount & Dough Feel

Water quantities are guidelines. Aim for a smooth, cohesive dough—not dry or crumbly. Adjust during mixing (not after rising).

Shinier, Slightly Sweeter Bagels

For extra sheen and gentle sweetness, add about 1 teaspoon barley malt syrup to the dough and a generous tablespoon to the boiling water. (Brown sugar or honey in the boil is a reasonable substitute.)

Flour Options

Bread or high-gluten flour yields the chewiest texture. All-purpose flour works well (slightly less chewy). For whole-wheat, use half whole-wheat and half bread flour. Spelt variations can work; sifted spelt lightens the crumb.

Boiling Tips

Keep the water at a simmer rather than a rolling boil for smoother crusts. Handle shaped dough gently to avoid wrinkles.

Pan Prep

Use lightly oiled parchment or a silicone mat to minimize sticking; a light oiling of the parchment adds extra insurance.

Altitude

At higher elevations, dough rises faster. Consider reducing yeast to 1 teaspoon and allow a full rise until doubled (timing may vary).

Make-Ahead & Storage

- **Cold Rise:** After kneading, cover and refrigerate overnight for deeper flavor. Bring to room temp for about 30 minutes before shaping.
- **Par-Bake:** Bake 10–15 minutes until just faintly golden. Cool, freeze airtight. From frozen, bake an additional 10–15 minutes until golden.
- **Freezing:** Cool completely, slice, and freeze in a freezer bag. Toast straight from frozen if desired.
- **Room Temp Storage:** In a resealable bag up to 2 days.

Nutrition (Approximate, per 1 of 8 bagels)

Calories	228.4
Carbohydrates	44.4 g
Protein	6 g
Total Fat	—
Trans Fat	1.4 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	441 mg
Fiber	1.7 g
Sugar	2.4 g

FAQs

Yeast Choices

Fresh yeast: Use approximately 2.5:1 fresh-to-active-dry by weight (about 15 g fresh for this recipe). Fresh yeast need not be proofed.

Instant yeast: Substitute 1:1 by weight; no proofing required—add directly with flour and sugar.

Milder yeast flavor: Reduce active dry yeast to 1 teaspoon and double the first rise.

Temperature

Ideal water temperature for yeast activation is roughly 105–115°F (40.5–46°C).

Mixer/Bread Maker

A stand mixer with dough hook on the lowest speed for 5–6 minutes works well. For double batches, check the manufacturer’s capacity guidance.

Smoothness

Handle gently and keep the poach at a simmer rather than a rolling boil to avoid a wrinkly crust.

Egg Wash

Optional. Toppings adhere fine to wet, freshly boiled dough. Skip egg wash for a vegan-friendly result.

Sizing Up

Larger bagels need a few extra minutes in the oven; bake to uniform golden brown.

Cuisine: American Category: How-To Source adaptation: Home kitchen notes.