



Maple Pecan Sticky Buns



Author: Sally **Prep Time:** 4 hours (includes rises)

Cook Time: 28 minutes

Total Time: 4 hours, 40 minutes (or overnight)

Yield: 12 buns

Breakfast and brunch have never been more indulgent and delicious than with these make-ahead maple pecan sticky buns! This is a soft, rich dough and a caramel-like stove-top glaze made with maple syrup. Use a 9×13-inch [glass pan](#) or [metal pan](#) for baking. Review recipe Notes before beginning and see the video tutorial below.

Ingredients

Dough

1 cup (240ml) **whole milk**, warmed to about 100°F (38°C)

2/3 cup (135g) **granulated sugar**, divided

1 and 1/2 Tablespoons (14g) active dry or instant **yeast** (2 standard size packets)

1/2 cup (8 Tbsp; 113g) **unsalted butter**, [softened to room temperature](#) and cut into 4 pieces

2 large **eggs**, at room temperature

1/2 teaspoon **salt**

4 and 1/2 cups (563g) **all-purpose flour** or **bread flour** ([spooned & leveled](#)), plus more as needed

2 teaspoons **canola**, **vegetable**, or **olive oil** for bowl (or use nonstick spray)

Topping

2 cups (250g) chopped **pecans**

1/2 cup (8 Tbsp; 113g) **unsalted butter**

2/3 cup (135g) packed light or dark **brown sugar**

1/4 cup (60ml) **whole milk**

1/4 cup (60ml) **pure maple syrup**

1/4 teaspoon **salt**

Filling

1/4 cup (4 Tbsp; 56g) **unsalted butter**, [softened to room temperature](#)

1/2 cup (100g) packed light or dark **brown sugar**

2 teaspoons **ground cinnamon**

Instructions

- 1 **Prepare the dough:** Whisk the warm milk, 2 Tablespoons sugar, and the yeast together in the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with a dough hook or paddle attachment. Cover and allow mixture to sit for about 5 minutes or until foamy on top. **If you do not own a mixer, you can do this in a large mixing bowl and in the next step, mix the dough together with a large wooden spoon/silicone spatula. It will take a bit of arm muscle. A hand mixer works, but the sticky dough repeatedly gets stuck in the beaters. Mixing by hand with a wooden spoon or silicone spatula is a better choice.**
- 2 On medium speed, beat in the remaining sugar (which should be 1/2 cup, or 100g) and the softened butter until it is slightly broken up. Add the eggs and salt and beat on medium speed until combined. The butter won't really be mixing into the mixture, so don't be alarmed if it stays in pieces. Turn the mixer down to low speed and, with it running, add 1 cup of flour at a time, making sure it's fully incorporated before adding the next. After 4 cups have been added, add the last 1/2 cup and beat until the dough comes together and pulls away from the sides of the bowl, about 3 minutes. Dough will be soft. If it's not pulling away from the sides of the bowl, add more flour, 1 Tablespoon at a time, until it reaches a kneadable consistency.
- 3 **Knead the dough:** Keep the dough in the mixer and beat for an additional 5 full minutes, or knead by hand on a lightly floured surface for 5 full minutes. (If you're new to bread-baking, my [How to Knead Dough](#) video tutorial can help here.) If the dough becomes too sticky during the kneading process, sprinkle a teaspoon of flour on the dough or on the work surface/in the bowl to make a soft, slightly tacky dough. Do not add more flour than you need because you do not want a dry dough. After kneading, the dough should feel soft, smooth, and elastic. Poke it with your finger—if it slowly bounces back, your dough is ready to rise. You can also do a “windowpane test” to see if your dough has been kneaded long enough: tear off a small (roughly golfball-size) piece of dough and gently stretch it out until it's thin enough for light to pass through it. Hold it up to a window or light. Does light pass through the stretched dough without the dough tearing first? If so, your dough has been kneaded long enough and is ready to rise. If not, keep kneading until it passes the windowpane test.
- 4 **1st Rise:** Lightly grease a large bowl with oil or nonstick spray. Place the dough in the bowl, turning it to coat all sides in the oil. Cover the bowl with aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or a clean kitchen towel. Allow the dough to rise in a relatively warm environment for 2 hours or until double in size. (I always let it rise on the counter and it takes about 2 hours. For a tiny reduction in rise time, see my answer to *Where Should Dough Rise?* in my [Baking with Yeast Guide](#).)

- 5 **Meanwhile, make the topping:** Grease the bottom and sides of a [9×13-inch glass baking pan](#) or [metal baking pan](#). Spread chopped pecans in an even layer in the pan. Set aside. Combine the rest of the topping ingredients in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the butter has melted, then bring to a simmer. Allow to simmer for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, give it a quick whisk, then pour over pecans. Set aside.
- 6 **Roll out the dough:** Punch down the dough to release the air. Place dough on a lightly floured work surface and, with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough into a 12×18-inch rectangle. Make sure the dough is smooth and evenly thick. If the dough keeps shrinking back as you roll it out, stop what you're doing, cover it lightly, and let it rest for 10 minutes to relax the gluten. When you return to the dough, it should stretch out much easier.
- 7 **For the filling:** Spread the softened butter all over the dough. The softer the butter is, the easier it is to spread in this step. (Microwave it for a few seconds to soften if needed.) In a small bowl, mix the sugar and cinnamon together. Sprinkle evenly over the butter. Tightly roll up the dough to form an 18-inch-long log. If some filling spills out, sprinkle it on top of the roll. With an extra sharp knife, cut into 12 even rolls, about 1.5 inches wide each. Arrange in the prepared baking pan, on top of the pecan topping.
- 8 **2nd Rise:** Cover the rolls tightly and allow to rise until puffy, about 30–45 minutes. (Or use the overnight option in the Notes below.)
- 9 Preheat oven to **350°F (177°C)**. Bake for 25–28 minutes or until the rolls are golden-brown on top. About halfway through baking time, loosely tent a piece of aluminum foil over the top of the pan to prevent the tops from browning too quickly. Remove pan from the oven and place on a wire rack. Cool for 5 minutes.
- 10 Using oven mitts, carefully invert the pan onto a large serving platter. The warm topping will melt down the sides. Serve warm.

Notes

- 1 **Make Ahead Instructions – Overnight:** To prepare the night before serving, prepare the rolls through step 7. Cover the rolls tightly and refrigerate for 8–12 hours. (16 hours max. 8–12 hours is best, but 16 hours is OK if absolutely needed. **Do not exceed 16 hours.**) The next morning, remove from the refrigerator and allow to rise on the counter for about 1 hour before continuing with step 9.
- 2 **Make Ahead Instructions – Freezing:** You can freeze sticky buns for up to 3 months, and I recommend a few different methods for freezing sticky buns. The first method is to freeze them after shaping, before they've had their 2nd rise (step 7). Thaw in the refrigerator overnight, then let rise for 1.5–2 hours at room temperature before baking. The second method is to par-bake the risen buns for 10 minutes, let cool completely, then cover and freeze. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight, then let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before baking. Finish baking for 15–20 minutes. You can also freeze fully baked sticky buns. See [How to Freeze Cinnamon Rolls](#) for more details about all of these methods.

- 3 **Special Tools** (affiliate links): [Stand Mixer](#) or [Large Mixing Bowl](#) and [Wooden Spoon/Silicone Spatula](#) | [9×13-inch Glass Baking Dish](#) | [Rolling Pin](#) | [Cooling Rack](#)
- 4 **Milk:** Whole milk or 2% is best for this rich dough and topping. I do not recommend nondairy milk in the topping, but you could use it in the dough.
- 5 **Yeast:** If using active dry yeast, the rise times will be slightly longer. I always use an instant yeast. Reference my [Baking with Yeast Guide](#) for answers to common yeast FAQs.
- 6 **What can I use instead of maple syrup?** If you want to skip the maple syrup in the topping, replace it with light or dark corn syrup.
- 7 **Gluten Free:** We have not tested this recipe with gluten-free flour, so we are unsure of the results.

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