



## Baker's Croissants

Known in France as *croissants de boulanger*, this yeasted dough is layered with butter and given a succession of folds that create the distinctive profile of classic croissants. Light and airy and shatteringly crisp, with a deeply caramelized buttery flavor, these croissants are a labor of love that's absolutely worth the time.

### Dough

- 2 large eggs + enough warm water to make 2 cups of liquid (16 ounces)
- 1/4 cup sugar, divided
- 5 1/2 to 6 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 1/4 teaspoons instant yeast
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 cup Baker's Special Dry Milk or nonfat dry milk (optional)
- 1 scant tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional; for sweet pastry)

### Butter

- 1 7/8 cups unsalted butter, cool to the touch
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour

### Directions

1. For the dough: Put the eggs and water in a large mixing bowl. Add 1 tablespoon of the sugar, 3 cups of the flour, and the yeast. Mix until well blended; set aside to let the sponge work.
2. For the butter: Cut the butter into 1" chunks and combine with the salt and flour at low speed in a stand mixer just until smooth, with no lumps. Be careful not to beat too much; you don't want to incorporate any air.
3. Spread the dough on a piece of plastic wrap and shape into an 8" square. Wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4. Finish the dough: Add the melted butter to the sponge. Whisk together the remaining sugar, 2 1/2 cups of the flour, the dry milk, and salt and add to the sponge. Mix until the dough forms. Knead for 5 minutes; touch the dough lightly with your finger. If it's still sticky, add the remaining flour 2 tablespoons at a time until the dough is the desired consistency. Once the dough is smooth and elastic, pat it into a 9" square, then wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
5. To laminate the dough: Remove the chilled dough from the refrigerator and gently roll it to a 12" square.
6. Unwrap the butter square and place it in the center of the dough at a 45° angle, so it looks like a diamond in a square. Pull the corners of the dough into the center of the butter diamond. Moisten the edges with a little water and pinch the seams together well to enclose the butter. Dust the top with flour and turn the packet over.
7. Tap the dough all over with a rolling pin, encouraging it into a rectangular shape. Once it's pliable, roll it to a 20" x 10" rectangle, picking it up and dusting lightly with flour as needed.
8. When you've reached the proper size, use a dry brush to sweep off any excess flour and fold the dough in thirds, like a business letter. Take care to keep the edges straight and line them up directly over each other. If the dough slides around, use a little water at the corners to tack them in place. This is your first turn.



### AT A GLANCE

PREP  
45 mins.

BAKE  
30 mins. to 40 mins.

TOTAL  
4 hrs 30 mins.

YIELD  
24 croissants

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9. Rotate the dough out so it looks like a book about to be opened. Roll the dough out once more to 20" x 10" and fold it as before. This is the second turn. Wrap the dough and refrigerate it for 30 minutes to allow the gluten in the dough to relax.
10. Give the dough two more turns after its rest, then wrap the dough well and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight before using. You can also freeze the dough at this point.
11. To shape the croissants: Cut the packet of dough in half. Wrap and refrigerate or freeze one half.
12. Roll the other half to a 13" x 18" rectangle. Trim the edges about 1/4" all the way around with a ruler and pizza cutter. This removes the folded edges that would inhibit the dough's rise.
13. Cut the dough in thirds lengthwise and in half down the center. This will give you six 4" x 9" pieces. Cut these pieces in half diagonally and arrange them so the points are facing away from you. Stretch them gently to make them a little longer, then cut a 1" notch in the center of the base of each triangle.
14. Take the two inside corners of the notch and roll them up toward you, building a curved shape as you roll the base of the dough toward the tip. Make sure the tip ends up under the bottom of the croissant. Place the shaped pastry on a parchment-lined baking sheet, curving the ends toward each other.
15. Refrigerate the dough for 30 minutes while you preheat the oven to 425°F. Just before baking, brush the croissants all over with an egg beaten with 1 tablespoon water. Bake for 15 minutes, then reduce the oven's temperature to 350°F and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more, until deep golden brown and no raw dough is visible where the layers overlap. Remove from the oven and let cool on the pan on a rack for 20 minutes before serving.
16. Store wrapped at room temperature for 2 days; refresh for 10 minutes in a 350°F oven. Croissants don't store well, so try to bake only what you'll use quickly.
17. Yield: 4 pounds, enough for 2 dozen.

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### Tips from our bakers

- Adding flour to the butter inlay helps to stabilize it, so the butter won't flow out the seams of the dough as it's being rolled.
- Bubbles and leaks: It's not unusual to have air trapped inside your laminated dough. If this happens, simply pop the bubble with a toothpick and press the dough down to lie flat. If there's a bare spot where butter is coming through, dust the leak with flour, pressing down lightly so it sticks, and continue on with the fold. Refrigerate the dough as soon as the fold is done, to firm it up.
- As you work, keep the dough, work surface, and your rolling pin well dusted with flour. Turn over the dough from time to time. As you roll, you tend to expand the top layers more than the bottom. By flipping the dough over, you'll even that out. Before folding the dough over on itself, use your pastry brush to sweep off excess flour. This will help the dough stick to itself after folding, so the layers don't slide around.
- Have a little water on hand; don't be afraid to brush the corners of the dough with it, to tack the dough in place.
- You can make rectangular, filled croissants, too. See our blog for step by step instructions on how to do this. Fill croissants with ham and cheese, spinach, or use our pain au chocolate sticks for a special treat.
- When rolling the dough, especially for the first time, be sure the dough and butter are at the same consistency; this will make rolling much smoother and the layers will be more even.
- To make Danish from this dough, add 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom, 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg, and 1/8 teaspoon of ground cloves to the dough when mixing. Proceed with the rest of the recipe as shown until the dough is finished.