



## Hot Buttered Soft Pretzels

Pretzels are available crisp and hard from your grocery or, if you're lucky and in the right place, soft and chewy from street vendors. Our recipe is for the soft, chewy kind. The melted butter brushed over the crust is a bonus street vendors don't offer!

Want to make smaller, appetizer-size pretzels? See our instructions for pretzel bites in "tips," below.

### Dough

- 2 1/2 cups King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 1/4 teaspoons instant yeast
- 7/8 to 1 cup warm water\*

\*Use the greater amount in the winter, the lesser amount in the summer, and somewhere in between in the spring and fall. Your goal is a soft dough.

### Topping

- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 tablespoons baking soda
- coarse, kosher or pretzel salt, optional
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

### Directions

1. To make dough by hand, or with a mixer: Place all of the dough ingredients into a bowl, and beat until well-combined. Knead the dough, by hand or machine, for about 5 minutes, until it's soft, smooth, and quite slack. Flour the dough and place it in a bag, and allow it to rest for 30 minutes.
2. To make dough with a bread machine: Place all of the dough ingredients into the pan of your bread machine, program the machine for dough or manual, and press Start. Allow the dough to proceed through its kneading cycle (no need to let it rise), then cancel the machine, flour the dough, and give it a rest in a plastic bag, as instructed above.
3. To make dough with a food processor: Place the flour, salt, sugar and yeast in the work bowl of a food processor equipped with the steel blade. Process for 5 seconds. Add the water, and process for 7 to 10 seconds, until the dough starts to clear the sides of the bowl. Process a further 45 seconds. Place a handful of flour in a bowl, scoop the slack dough into the bowl, and shape the dough into a ball, coating it with the flour. Transfer the dough to a plastic bag, close the bag loosely, leaving room for the dough to expand, and let it rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.
4. While the dough is resting, prepare the topping: Combine the boiling water and baking soda, stirring until the soda is totally (or almost totally) dissolved. Set the mixture aside to cool to lukewarm (or cooler).
5. Preheat your oven to 475°F. Prepare a baking sheet by spraying it with vegetable oil spray, or lining it with parchment paper. If you're not using King Arthur Flour's brand, grease the parchment with vegetable oil spray to make double-sure the pretzels won't stick.
6. Transfer the dough to a lightly greased work surface, and divide it into eight equal pieces (about 70g, or 2 1/2 ounces, each).
7. Allow the pieces to rest, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Pour the baking soda/water into a 9" square pan.



### AT A GLANCE

PREP
20 mins. to 30 mins.
BAKE
8 mins. to 9 mins.
TOTAL
1 hrs 10 mins. to 1 hrs 21 mins.
YIELD
8 large pretzels

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8. Roll each piece of dough into a long, thin rope (about 28" to 30" long), and twist each rope into a pretzel. Working with 4 pretzels at a time, place them in the pan with the baking soda/water, spooning the water over their tops; leave them in the water for 2 minutes before placing them on the baking sheet. This baking soda "bath" will give the pretzels a nice, golden-brown color.
  9. Transfer the pretzels to the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle them lightly with coarse, kosher, or pretzel salt, if desired. Allow them to rest, uncovered, for 10 minutes.
  10. Bake the pretzels for 8 to 9 minutes, or until they're golden brown.
  11. Remove the pretzels from the oven, and brush them thoroughly with the melted butter. Keep brushing the butter on until you've used it all up; it may seem like a lot, but that's what gives these pretzels their ethereal taste. Eat the pretzels warm, or reheat them in an oven or microwave.
  12. Yield: 8 large pretzels.
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#### **Tips from our bakers**

- To make savory pretzel bites: Roll the six pieces of dough into 10" ropes. Cut each rope crosswise into 6 to 10 equal pieces. Dip the pieces into the baking soda solution, place on a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet, and top with pretzel salt or sea salt. Bake in a 400°F oven for 12 to 15 minutes, until golden brown. Remove from the oven, and roll the bites in melted butter; about 6 tablespoons should do it.
- To make sweet pretzel bites: Roll the six pieces of dough into 10" ropes. Cut each rope crosswise into 6 to 10 equal pieces. Dip the pieces into the baking soda solution, place on a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet, and top with pearl sugar, if desired. Bake in a 400°F oven for 12 to 15 minutes, until golden brown. Remove them from the oven; if they haven't been topped with pearl sugar, roll the bites in melted butter (about 6 tablespoons should do it). Then shake in a paper bag with 6 tablespoons cinnamon-sugar.