



Potato Burger Buns

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 13: Ultimate Grilled Turkey Burgers

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

Mashed potatoes are hefty and substantial, but in a potato rolls recipe, they give the crumb a light, tender, moist texture. That's because the starches in potatoes dilute the gluten-forming proteins, which weakens the structural network and makes it softer, moister, and more tender. For the lightest potato rolls, we use a combination of ½ pound of mashed russet potatoes and high-protein bread flour. This creates a potato roll dough with a stable structure that supports the greatest amount of potatoes, producing rolls that were not only perfectly risen but also light and airy.

Makes 9 Rolls

These rolls are ideal for both burgers and sandwiches. Don't salt the cooking water for the potatoes. A pound of russet potatoes should yield just over 1 very firmly packed cup (1/2 pound) of mash. To ensure optimum rise, your dough should be warm; if your potatoes or potato water is too hot to touch, let cool before proceeding with the recipe. This dough looks very dry when mixing begins but will soften as mixing progresses. If you prefer, you may portion the rolls by weight in step 5 (2.75 ounces of dough per roll).

INGREDIENTS

- 1** pound russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2** tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 4-inch pieces
- 2 1/4** cups (12 1/3 ounces) bread flour
- 1** tablespoon sugar
- 2** teaspoons instant or rapid-rise yeast
- 1** teaspoon salt
- 2** large eggs, 1 lightly beaten with 1 teaspoon water and pinch salt
- 1** tablespoon sesame seeds (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Place potatoes in medium saucepan and add water to just cover. Bring to boil over high heat; reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until potatoes are cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes.
- 2.** Transfer 5 tablespoons potato water to bowl to cool; drain potatoes. Return potatoes to saucepan and place over low heat. Cook, shaking pot occasionally, until any surface moisture has evaporated, about 1 minute. Remove from heat. Process potatoes through ricer or food mill or mash well with potato masher. Measure 1 very firmly packed cup potatoes and transfer to bowl. Reserve any remaining potatoes for another use. Stir in butter until melted.
- 3.** Combine flour, sugar, yeast, and salt in bowl of stand mixer. Add warm potato mixture to flour mixture and mix with hands until combined (some large lumps are OK). Add 1 egg and reserved potato water; mix with dough hook on low speed until dough is soft and slightly sticky, 8 to 10 minutes.
- 4.** Shape dough into ball and place in lightly greased container. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and allow to rise at

room temperature until almost doubled in volume, 30 to 40 minutes.

5. Turn out dough onto counter, dusting with flour only if dough is too sticky to handle comfortably. Pat gently into 8-inch square of even thickness. Using bench knife or chef's knife, cut dough into 9 pieces (3 rows by 3 rows). Separate pieces and cover loosely with plastic.

6. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time and keeping remaining pieces covered, form dough pieces into smooth, taut rounds. (To round, set piece of dough on unfloured work surface. Loosely cup hand around dough and, without applying pressure to dough, move hand in small circular motions. Tackiness of dough against work surface and circular motion should work dough into smooth, even ball, but if dough sticks to hands, lightly dust fingers with flour.) Cover rounds with plastic and allow to rest for 15 minutes.

7. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper. On lightly floured surface, firmly press each dough round into 3 1/2-inch disk of even thickness, expelling large pockets of air. Arrange on prepared baking sheets. Cover loosely with plastic and let rise at room temperature until almost doubled in size, 30 to 40 minutes. While rolls rise, adjust oven racks to middle and upper-middle positions and heat oven to 425 degrees.

8. Brush rolls gently with egg wash and sprinkle with sesame seeds, if using. Bake rolls until deep golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes, rotating and switching baking sheets halfway through baking. Transfer baking sheets to wire racks and let cool for 5 minutes. Transfer rolls from baking sheets to wire racks. Serve warm or at room temperature.

TECHNIQUE

POTATO-ROLL HIGHS (AND LOWS)

The more mashed potato we added to our dough the better the results—until we hit 1 full cup at which point the rolls started to collapse under the weight of the spuds. But switching from all-purpose flour to higher-protein bread flour gave the dough the strength it needed to support the mash, so the rolls baked up tall, light, and fluffy.

LOW RISE: Avoid all-purpose flour.



HIGH RISE: Use high-protein bread flour.



TECHNIQUE

WHY POTATO?

Here are four good reasons why we crammed a full packed cup of mashed potatoes into our rolls.

Quicker Rise: The potassium in potatoes has a positive effect on yeast, causing it to rise faster and more vigorously than it would in wheat-only breads, which also leads to lighter texture.

Super-Soft Crumb: When boiled, potato starch molecules swell and interfere with the ability of flour proteins to form gluten, ensuring tender bread.

Moist Texture: Potato starch granules are about five times larger than wheat starch granules and are therefore capable of absorbing at least five times more water, resulting in a moister crumb.

Longer Shelf Life: Potato starch molecules hinder wheat starches from staling, thereby keeping the bread's crumb soft for days.

SUPER SPUD: The humble potato almost goof-proofs bread baking.

