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The perfect slice - Cutting bread made easy V.3

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We use this protocol and it's
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Disclaimer

No loaves were harmed in the making of this protocol (except the one you're about to slice). While mastering the art of slicing bread may elevate your culinary skills, the authors cannot be held responsible for any rogue crumbs, uneven slices, or sudden urges to become a sandwich artist. Please cut responsibly, and remember—bread should be sliced, not conquered!

Abstract

Bread cutting, while seemingly simple, is an art that embodies both precision and mindfulness. "Cutting bread is the simplest form of precision, where a steady hand meets the resistance of nature." This act, at its core, highlights the balance between technique and texture. The crisp outer crust offers resistance, while the soft, porous interior requires a gentler touch. A good cut ensures minimal tearing, preserves the bread's structure, and enhances the overall dining experience.

In this protocol, we'll explore the science behind the perfect slice: from the choice of knife and cutting angles to considering the different degrees of freshness of bread. Whether you're working with a crusty sourdough or a soft brioche, understanding the interaction between blade and loaf will help you achieve clean, even, regular cuts every time. We'll dive into the subtle mechanics of slicing, where small adjustments can make all the difference.

Guidelines

Commission for Bread Integrity and Slice Thickness (CBIST)

International Slicing Standards (ISS)

Guidelines for the Ethical Treatment of Crumbs (GETC)

Safety warnings

- ❗ While bread cutting may seem like a harmless task, remember that knives are sharp, and bread has a sneaky way of making you overconfident. Keep your fingers well away from the blade, unless you're planning to add a surprise ingredient to your sandwich. Always cut on a stable surface to avoid any accidental flying loaf incidents, and resist the temptation to test your bread juggling skills mid-slice. If you're feeling particularly ambitious, maybe leave the chainsaw-level bread knives to the pros. Always stay sharp—but not too sharp!

Ethics statement

In accordance with the **Guidelines for the Ethical Treatment of Crumbs (GETC)**, all bread in this protocol will be sliced humanely and with the utmost respect for crust integrity. We adhere strictly to the **Crumb Conservation Protocol (CCP)**, ensuring minimal crumb displacement and maximum loaf dignity. Any reckless or aggressive slicing techniques are discouraged and may result in disciplinary action. Always remember: Only a well-cut loaf is a happy loaf.

Before start

Before embarking on your bread-cutting journey, it's essential to gather the right tools and prepare your workspace. First, you'll need a sharp,(ideally) serrated bread knife—this is key to achieving clean slices without crushing the loaf. A sturdy wooden cutting board, preferably one large enough to accommodate the entire loaf, will help keep things stable. The bread must be at room temperature, as warm bread can be too soft to slice properly. Additionally, you'll want a soft brush or cloth to collect stray crumbs, and, of course, a loaf of bread ready for slicing! Lastly, clear any distractions—because bread cutting, though seemingly simple, deserves your full attention.

Prepare to cut

- 1 Gather Your Tools: a serrated bread knife (aka "Loaf Saber"), a sturdy wooden cutting board, a nice loaf of bread, and a piece of cloth for crum control



Not much is needed - a non-slip plastic board will also do

Note

Do not attempt this with a dull blade or butter knife –unless you're willing to sacrifice your bread's dignity.

- 2 Make sure your bread is at  Room temperature . Warm bread will squish under pressure, like a marshmallow in a vice. If you're dealing with freshly baked bread, let it cool first.

3

Make sure the cutting board is on a stable surface, not teetering on the edge of the counter. Flying loaves are fun, but not recommended.

The Art of the Slice

- 4 Place the loaf horizontally on the cutting board, crust-side up. Gently hold the loaf with your non-dominant hand. This gives you maximum control and prevents the bread from rolling around like a rebellious potato.
- 5 Place the serrated knife at the edge of the loaf and begin with gentle sawing motions using the full size of the blade. Don't press the knife firmly into the bread. No need to Hulk-smash your way through the crust; let the blade do the work.



The starting position. Hold the knife firm and straight. Pay attention to the desired thickness already

- 6 Once you're through the crust, ease up on the pressure to avoid squishing the soft interior. Keep that sawing motion steady, as if you're serenading the bread with the world's weirdest violin solo.



Be gentle at this phase if the bread is fresh.

- 7 Hold the knife steady and continue slicing until you reach the outer layer which is crust-like. Here it is okay to increase the pressure again and with your non-dominant hand slightly lift and rotate the bread from the cutting board until the slicing process is complete. Treat the entire process like bread origami. You're sculpting a masterpiece, not hacking through the jungle.

Note

On your cutting board should be now a horizontally and vertically evenly cut slice of bread. If the upper and lower sides of your slice are uneven, try to adjust the pressure when cutting the interior. If your slice is horizontally uneven, pay attention that you hold the knife straight during the entire cutting process.



When halfway through, you can rotate the bread with your left hand away from you in a 20° angle between bread and board. This ensures a straight cut while getting closer to the end of the process. Gently increase the pressure again.

Advanced Slicing Techniques

- 8 If you have an especially tall or wide loaf, feel free to rotate the loaf to get a better angle.
- 9 Approach the end pieces (also known as the "butt" of the loaf) with care. These are prime real estate for butter or toppings. The trick here is to angle your knife slightly to maintain a nice, flat surface.

Note

Don't throw away the end pieces! They make excellent croutons or, if nothing else, a snack for the slicer's reward.

Post-Slice Clean-Up

- 10 After you've finished slicing, take a moment to admire your work (this is important). Then, use a piece of cloth to gently sweep away the crumbs. Crumbs will scatter, and that's just life.

Final notes

- 11
 - **Always cut with confidence.** Bread can sense fear.
 - If at any point you find yourself struggling, remember: it's just bread. The worst-case scenario is a wonky slice, which still tastes amazing.
 - And finally, congratulations! You're now certified in the art of bread slicing—graduates of the **Great International Guild of Artisanal Slicers (GIGA)**.

Now go forth, slice responsibly, and spread some butter on that masterpiece!



