



# Easy Crusty French Bread

★★★★★ 4.9 from 218 reviews

Author: Jessie Prep Time: 1 hour 30 mins Cook Time: 45 mins

Total Time: 2 hours 15 minutes Yield: 1 loaf (about 6 servings) 1x

## Description

Easy dutch oven bread ready in just a few hours – no overnight rise needed.

## Ingredients

SCALE 1x 2x 3x

2.25 tsp. active dry yeast  
 1 tsp. sugar  
 1.25 cups warm water (about 100 degrees F should do)  
 1.5 tsp. kosher salt  
 2.5 cups All-Purpose Flour, plus extra for dusting

← about 1 tsp. table salt

## Instructions

- 1 Combine yeast, sugar, and warm water in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook (you could also mix this dough by hand if you like – just use a large mixing bowl instead).
- 2 Let the yeast proof for about 5 minutes, until the mixture looks nice and foamy.
- 3 Add kosher salt to bowl.
- 4 Add flour to bowl a bit at a time and mix on low speed until all flour is incorporated and dough has just started to pull away from the sides of the bowl. (If you're mixing by hand, mix until ingredients have just come together and form a smooth dough).
- 5 Turn off the mixer and remove the bowl & dough hook. Set the dough hook aside.
- 6 Lightly flour all sides of your dough (don't mix the flour in – it's just to keep the dough from sticking!) and turn it over inside the mixing bowl to coat with flour on all sides. Cover with a tea towel and let rise on the counter for about 1 hour, until dough has doubled in size.
- 7 When dough has risen, lightly flour a large cutting board.
- 8 Tip the dough out of the bowl and onto the cutting board. DO NOT PUNCH THE DOUGH DOWN – you want to keep all those nice air bubbles intact so you have an airy, delicious loaf of bread. (Note: If the dough is sticking to the bowl a little bit, just wet your hand with a bit of water and gently separate the dough from the bowl to get it all out).
- 9 Sprinkle a bit of flour across the top of the dough, then begin shaping it into a round loaf. I like to pull each corner of the dough in towards the center (like I'm folding an envelope) a few times, then flip the dough over and tap it into a nice round loaf. (Watch the video above to see how I do this!)
- 10 Flour a proofing basket or a small mixing bowl and place your loaf into it seam-side down. Cover with a tea towel and let rise another 30 minutes or so.
- 11 While bread proofs, place an empty dutch oven (with the lid on) in your oven and heat to 460 degrees F.
- 12 When the oven is hot, you're ready to go! Use oven mitts to pull the dutch oven out and remove the lid.
- 13 Tip your bread dough gently out of the proofing basket back onto your floured cutting board, and then VERY CAREFULLY (without burning yourself!) place it – seam side UP, this time – into the hot dutch oven. (You can use a piece of parchment paper here to make this easier if you like – see video and recipe notes).
- 14 Put your oven mitts back on, put the dutch oven lid back on the pot, and slide the whole thing back into your hot oven.

- 15 Cook bread for 30 minutes.
- 16 After 30 minutes, remove the lid from your dutch oven. The bread should be crusty and lightly browned. Continue cooking, uncovered, for 10-20 minutes more until the bread has deepened in color and you have a beautiful brown crust.
- 17 When bread is done, use oven mitts to pull the pot out of your oven.
- 18 Use a long spatula to lift the bread out of the dutch oven and onto a cooling rack. Let cool for at least 20 minutes before cutting into it. Slice, slather with butter, and enjoy!

## Notes

- **EQUIPMENT:** I use a [Le Creuset Dutch oven](#) and [this proofing basket](#). If you're looking for a more budget-friendly Dutch oven, I've also heard great things about [this one](#).
- My Dutch oven is a Le Creuset with the plastic knob, and I have not personally had a problem at this 460 degree F temperature. If you're worried about the knob on your Le Creuset melting, you can replace it with [one of their metal ones](#) for relatively cheap! As always, please check the care instructions on your equipment.
- If you like, you can use a piece of parchment paper (as shown in the video above) to make it easier to lift the loaf in and out of the Dutch oven.
- You can use pretty much any size of Dutch oven (or French oven, as Le Creuset calls them) for this bread – anything in the neighborhood of a 5- or 6-quart size will work.
- You may not need all of the flour for this recipe (or you may need a little more!) The consistency of your dough depends on the temperature and humidity of the room, the weight of ingredients, etc. So if your dough looks like it needs a little more flour maybe doesn't need the full 2.5 cups, go with your instincts!
- If your kitchen is chilly, you may need to let the bread rise longer than suggested.
- This bread is a wonderful side dish for pretty much everything, but some of my favorite pairings include [parmesan spinach gnocchi](#), [turkey chili](#), [soups](#), or this [creamy mushroom pasta](#).
- If you love this recipe, try my [Easy Crusty Asiago Bread](#) next!

Serves 6

Calories Per Serving: **197**

% DAILY VALUE			
Total Fat 0.6g	1%	Cholesterol 0g	0%
Sodium 480.9mg	20%	Total Carbohydrate 41.1g	14%
Sugars 0.8g		Protein 6g	12%
Vitamin A 0g	0%	Vitamin C 0mg	0%

## Nutrition

Calories: 197