

Best Pizza Dough

Adapted from *More Cooking in the Wine Country* by Joanne Weir

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup unbleached bread flour
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups unbleached all purpose flour
2 teaspoons dry yeast
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons warm water (100F)
2 tablespoons olive oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

In a bowl, combine the yeast, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the lukewarm water, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the flour. Let it stand at room temperature (75 degrees or warmer) until it bubbles up, a minimum of 30 minutes or up to 1 hour. (This is the sponge).

Put the sponge and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons lukewarm water, the remaining 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour, the olive oil, and the salt into the bowl of a high power stand mixer (like a Kitchenaid) with a dough hook. Knead with the dough hook for 4-5 minutes until you have a nice clean ball that sticks to the dough hook. Turn it out onto a well floured surface and knead by hand until smooth, elastic, and a bit tacky to the touch – another 3-4 minutes.

Place the dough in an oiled bowl and turn to cover lightly with oil. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place (75 F) until doubled in volume, 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Then punch it down, form into a ball, and form the pizzas. You can cut into thirds or quarters for smaller pizzas. You can press the dough with your hands, and then pick it up and stretch and twirl it until it's as thin as you want it. This recipe is enough for 2 medium pizzas or 4 personal size pizzas.

Sprinkle your toppings on and bake at 475 degrees for about 8-10 minutes, until the crust is crisp. You can use a pizza stone or a pizza pan sprinkled with a little cornmeal.

This dough can be kept in the refrigerator for 2-3 days or frozen.