

Homemade Pizza

INGREDIENTS

Pizza Dough: Makes enough dough for two 10-12 inch pizzas

- 1 1/2 cups (355 ml) warm water (105°F-115°F)
- 1 package (2 1/4 teaspoons) of active dry yeast
- 3 3/4 cups (490 g) bread flour
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Pizza Ingredients

- Extra virgin olive oil
- [Tomato sauce](#) (smooth, or puréed)
- Firm mozzarella cheese, grated or soft mozzarella cheese, separated into small clumps
- Mushrooms, very thinly sliced if raw, otherwise first sautéed
- Red peppers, stems and seeds removed, very thinly sliced
- Chopped fresh basil
- Pesto (optional)
- Onions, thinly sliced raw or caramelized
- Ham, thinly sliced (optional)
- Your favourite ingredients (sweetcorn, olives or any other type of cheese)

MAKING THE PIZZA DOUGH

1 Proof the yeast: Place the warm water in the large bowl of a heavy duty stand mixer. Sprinkle the yeast over the warm water and let it sit for 5 minutes until the yeast is dissolved. After 5 minutes stir if the yeast hasn't dissolved completely. The yeast should begin to foam or bloom, indicating that the yeast is still active and alive.

(Note that if you are using "instant yeast" instead of "active yeast", no proofing is required. Just add to the flour in the next step.)

2 Make and knead the pizza dough: Using the mixing paddle attachment, mix in the flour, salt, sugar, and olive oil on low speed for a minute. Then replace the mixing paddle with the dough hook attachment.

Knead the pizza dough on low to medium speed using the dough hook about 7-10 minutes.

If you don't have a mixer, you can mix the ingredients together and knead them by hand.

The dough should be a little sticky, or tacky to the touch. If it's too wet, sprinkle in a little more flour.

3 Let the dough rise: Spread a thin layer of olive oil over the inside of a large bowl. Place the pizza dough in the bowl and turn it around so that it gets coated with the oil.

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A quick fermentation (1 1/2 hours in a warm place) will allow the dough to rise sufficiently to work with.

Cover the dough with plastic wrap.

PREPARING THE PIZZAS

1 Preheat pizza stone (or pizza pan or baking sheet): Place a pizza stone on a rack in the lower third of your oven. Preheat the oven to 475°F for at least 30 minutes, preferably an hour.

2 Divide the dough into two balls: Remove the plastic cover from the dough. Dust your hands with flour and push the dough down so it deflates a bit. Divide the dough in half.

Form two round balls of dough. Place each in its own bowl, cover with plastic and let sit for 15 minutes (or up to 2 hours).

3 Prep toppings: Prepare your desired toppings.

About a third a cup each of tomato sauce and cheese would be sufficient for one pizza.

4 Flatten dough ball, and stretch out into a round: Working one ball of dough at a time, take one ball of dough and flatten it with your hands on a slightly floured work surface.

Starting at the center and working outwards, use your fingertips to press the dough to 1/2-inch thick. Turn and stretch the dough until it will not stretch further.

5 Brush dough top with olive oil: Use your finger tips to press down and make dents along the surface of the dough to prevent bubbling. Brush the top of the dough with olive oil (to prevent it from getting soggy from the toppings). Let rest another 10-15 minutes.

Repeat with the second ball of dough.

6 Spread with tomato sauce and sprinkle with toppings: Spoon on the tomato sauce, sprinkle with cheese, and place your desired toppings on the pizza.

7 Bake pizza: Bake pizza until the crust is browned and the cheese is golden, about 10-15 minutes.

Enjoy! :)