

Basic Pizza Dough

Season: All

Serves: 30 tastes in the classroom
or 8 at home

Pizza is a great dish at any time of the year, and once you've mastered the basic techniques you can use this dough and experiment with toppings based on any ingredients that are in season.

Note: This dough quantity is enough for two pizzas. Make a batch in advance as it will need time to rest.

Equipment:

metric measuring scales, cups and spoons
bowls – 1 small, 2 large
fork
pastry brush
clean tea towel

Ingredients:

1 cup lukewarm water
1 tbsp instant dry yeast
1 tsp sugar
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus
extra for greasing
400 g plain flour,
plus extra for dusting
1 tsp salt

What to do:

1. Activate the dry yeast by placing it with the water and sugar in the small bowl and mixing with the fork. Leave it in a warm place for 5–10 minutes. It will start to look frothy as the yeast ferments the sugar into carbon dioxide.
2. Add the oil to the yeast mixture and mix well.
3. Place the flour and salt into a large bowl. Create a well in the centre.
4. Add the yeast mixture into the well.
5. Use your hands to incorporate the yeast mixture into the flour until the dough clings together and feels springy.
6. Tip the dough onto a clean, dry, floured workbench and knead for at least 8 minutes until the dough looks smooth.
7. Brush the inside of a large bowl with a little of the extra olive oil, then turn the dough into the oiled bowl.
8. Cover the bowl with a tea towel and put it in a draught-free place until the dough has doubled in size (at least 1 hour). This rise is called 'proving'.
9. Tip the dough onto the workbench and knead briefly. Shape it into a ball, return it to the bowl, cover with the tea towel, and leave for at least 20 minutes.
10. While the dough is proving you can prepare your toppings.
11. Once the dough has proved for the second time, roll it out and assemble the pizza.