

Pita Bread

Make authentic homemade Middle Eastern pita bread with this simple recipe. Soft, fluffy, and perfect for sandwiches, dips, and more.

20 min

PREP

10 min

COOK

30 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Pita Bread

Ingredients

- 2 cup flour
- 2 tsp yeast
- 3 cup water
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1 Activate the yeast**

Combine 2 teaspoons yeast, 1 tablespoon sugar, and 2 cups warm water (110°F/43°C) in a small bowl. Stir gently and let sit for 10-15 minutes until the mixture becomes foamy and bubbly.
- 2 Make the dough**

Whisk together 3 cups flour and 1 teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Create a well in the center and pour in the foamy yeast mixture. Mix with a wooden spoon until a rough, shaggy dough forms.
- 3** Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth and elastic. The dough should feel slightly tacky but not sticky and spring back when gently poked.
- 4 First rise**

Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, turning to coat all sides. Cover with a damp kitchen towel and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled in size.
- 5 Preheat oven**

Place an inverted baking sheet on the middle oven rack and preheat to 475°F (246°C). Allow 30 minutes for the baking sheet to heat thoroughly.
- 6 Shape the pita**

Punch down the risen dough and divide into 4 equal portions. Shape each piece into a smooth ball and let rest on a floured surface for 10 minutes, covered with a towel.
- 7** Roll each ball on a floured surface into a circle 6-8 inches in diameter and ¼ inch thick. Keep the thickness even for uniform puffing.
- 8** Place the rolled circles on a floured baking sheet, cover with a slightly damp cloth, and let rest for 15 minutes.

9 **Bake the pita**

Carefully slide 2 pita rounds onto the hot inverted baking sheet using a large spatula. Bake for 3-4 minutes until puffed like balloons and lightly golden on the bottom.

- 10 Remove from oven and immediately cover with a clean kitchen towel to keep soft and prevent deflating. Repeat with remaining 2 pita rounds. Serve warm or store at room temperature.

Tips

Use a kitchen thermometer to ensure your water temperature is between 100-110°F (38-43°C) for optimal yeast activation - too hot will kill the yeast, too cool will slow activation.

Place an inverted baking sheet or pizza stone in the oven during preheating to create an intensely hot surface that promotes better puffing.

Keep rolled dough circles covered with a damp towel to prevent them from drying out and forming a skin that inhibits puffing.

For extra flavor, brush the finished pita with olive oil and sprinkle with za'atar, sesame seeds, or coarse salt while still warm.

If making ahead, prepare the dough through the first rise, then refrigerate overnight and continue with shaping the next day for enhanced flavor development.

Don't open the oven door during the first 2-3 minutes of baking, as this releases the steam needed for proper puffing.

For a stovetop method, use a heavy cast-iron skillet heated over medium-high heat and cook each pita for 1-2 minutes per side until puffed and lightly spotted.

Dust your work surface and rolling pin generously with flour to prevent sticking, but avoid using too much flour which can make the dough tough.