

Paul's Bread Pages

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Rye Bread

Traditional rye bread is made with a mixture of rye flour and strong wheat flour. The main problem with rye is the lack of gluten, which prevents the dough from rising fully. By using a mixed grain, the bread will rise well. The bread is also made with a sourdough starter which gives it a distinct taste. This is not essential if you dislike sour bread.

450g strong white flour (or wholemeal, or white and wholemeal mix)
150g of rye flour (about 1:3 ratio with wheat flour)
1 sachet of dried yeast (**6g**) - a small amount of sugar - salt if required
350ml warm water (half boiling & half tap water)

Traditionally, rye bread does not contain oil. The sugar will start the yeast quickly and not affect the taste. I do not add salt, but a good pinch is traditional to the authentic taste.

Sourdough starter - Mix 100g of strong white flour and some dried yeast with warm water and kneed to a doughy consistence. Leave overnight and use to incorporate into the bread dough the next day. This is what gives the bread its sour taste.

Standard recipe

1. Mix the wheat flour, rye flour and yeast (+ sugar & salt) in a large mixing bowl using a large whisk to distribute ingredients evenly.
2. Add most of the water to a well in the centre of the mix and stir into a dough using a wooden spoon. (incorporate the sourdough starter here if used) Add a little more water if required.
3. Kneed the dough and sprinkle with flour. Leave for 1 hour.
4. Knock down the dough and kneed again for a few minutes. Leave for a further hour. Rye bread always has two risings before the final kneading to refine the texture.
5. Kneed for a few minutes and shape into a long loaf shape on a baking tray (or put in a loaf tin). Make a deep knife cut along the length of the bread and push the sides down to open the cut. Sprinkle with rye flour.
6. After the bread has risen, bake in a hot oven 220ºC for 15 minutes then turn the heat down to 170ºC for a further 25 minutes.
7. Cool for at least 2 hours before eating. Rye bread will freeze and can be defrosted overnight. The fresh bread will remain moist for longer than a white loaf.

For a variation, add 80g of golden syrup, black treacle or honey to the hot water before adding cold water. This makes a sweet rye loaf. Varnish the crust of the bread with a potato flour or rice flour mixed in hot water.

Note: *Avoid heating Teflon coated baking trays above 200ºC.*