

All-Purpose Pizza Dough
From the Cook's Life
Makes 3 14-inch thin or 2 14-inch medium crusts
or 4 flatbread pizzas (about 10 by 4)

This is the recipe we used for pizza dough when I was growing up, with a few tweaks. I have made it so many times that I don't need to look at the recipe anymore.

1 cup warm water
1 package yeast (2¼ teaspoons)
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons olive oil
3-3½ cups flour, approximately *
all-purpose flour for kneading
Your choice of toppings

*I use about 3 cups white whole wheat flour and ½ cup all-purpose flour. You can use entirely all-purpose flour if you prefer.

Measure water, yeast, sugar, salt, olive oil and 2 cups flour into a large mixing bowl. Stir until well mixed. Continue to add flour, about ½ cup at a time, until a soft dough forms. Sprinkle kneading surface with flour and turn dough out of bowl. Sprinkle dough with flour and knead until soft and elastic (about 5 minutes), adding flour if it sticks to your hands or the counter.

Lightly grease a large bowl. Place kneaded dough into bowl, cover bowl loosely with a wet towel or tightly with plastic wrap and set aside to rise. Dough should double in size in 45-60 minutes.

Grease pizza pans. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

For thin pizza crusts, divide dough into three pieces. For medium thick crusts, divide into two pieces. Place dough on pans and use your hands to press it out to the edges. If dough springs back, let it rest for a few minutes for the gluten to relax. Be patient, especially if you are making thin crusts. If you end up with holes, gently press the edges back together.

Top with your favorite pizza toppings. Bake 15 minutes at 425 degrees. Lower heat to 350 and continue baking for another 10-15 minutes, or until bottom and edges of crust are browned and cheese is melted and browned.

For flatbread pizzas:

Divide dough into 4 pieces. Press each out into a rough oval about 10 inches by 4 inches. Drizzle with olive oil and your toppings of choice: cheese, cooked meats,

veggies or whatever you like. Bake in a preheated 400 degree oven for about 15 minutes.

Let pizzas cool for about 5 minutes before cutting. Serve hot. Leftovers reheat well in a skillet, on a griddle or in the microwave. Or eat them cold.