

# Quick Pizza Dough

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*I find that putting an some sort of dry spice in the dough and then using minimal toppings like lightly brushed olive oil, thinly sliced onions and some Parmesan on top of a basil dough is sublime.*

1 1/2 cups flour (can replace up to half of this with whole wheat flour)

1 teaspoon salt

3/4 teaspoon active dry yeast

1/2 teaspoon of chili powder, basil, oregano, thyme or other dried spice (optional)

1/2 cup lukewarm water (100°-115°F)

1 tablespoon olive oil

Stir flour, salt, yeast, and spices (if using) together in a large bowl. Make a small well in the middle of the mixture and pour in the water and olive oil. Stir with a wooden spoon until the dough is in one big flaky clump and all of the flour has been incorporated. Dump it out on a lightly floured surface and knead for a minute or two until the dough is smooth. If the dough seems wet, dust with flour periodically until smooth. If the dough seems overly dry, run your hands under a warm tap and shake excess water off, then continue to knead. The tiny amount of dampness on your hands will make a big difference.

Form the dough into a ball and leave to rest for a minute on your kneading surface. Wash and dry your bowl using hot water. Using a warm bowl will help the dough rise. Lightly oil the bowl, using butter or olive oil. Put your dough ball in the bowl and turn it so that all sides are coated. Cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm, draft-free space until it has doubled in size. This usually takes an 1-2 hours depending on the temperature of your space.

When it has doubled in size, dump the dough back onto your counter and press the air out of it. Without too much additional kneading, form it back into a ball. Cover with plastic wrap and let it rest for 20 minutes. At this point you can get all mamma mia and use the toss method to shape your dough, but I find that a rolling pin works just as well. Form the dough into the desired shape and thickness. Press a groove around the edges if you like a puffier edge crust.

Place your dough on a pizza peel that has been sprinkled with corn meal or polenta, top with your favorite toppings and bake on a pizza stone that has been preheated to at least 450°F. Bake for about 10-12 minutes until it is blistered and your toppings are bubbling and amazing.

## Notes

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1. For a pizza of this type keep your toppings light-weight and thinly sliced. If you prefer a thicker crust pizza that will hold more toppings double the dough recipe.
2. My stove hits about 500°F without freaking out, but I find that this pizza will cook just fine at 450°F. A pizza stone is a must for good pieces. A cheap one can be had for \$20. Worth every penny for both pizza and bread.