

INGREDIENTS

6-8 cups flour
2 1/2 cups water
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup oil
1 tablespoon INSTANT yeast
1/2 tablespoon salt

This recipe uses INSTANT yeast. If you are using active dry or another kind of yeast, you will need to make modifications. This recipe makes two family-size loaves.



STEP ONE

Mix the sugar, oil, salt, and water in a large bowl until everything is dissolved.

STEP TWO

Add 3 cups flour and mix. You might not be able to get rid of all the clumps; that's fine!

STEP THREE

In a separate, small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon INSTANT yeast with one cup flour. After the yeast has been thoroughly mixed into the cup of flour, add the mixture to the dough.

STEP FOUR

Continue adding flour, between 2 and 4 more cups. As your mixture becomes more solid, add the flour more slowly. Add flour until you reach the point when, if you press the dough gently with clean fingers, no dough sticks to your hands.

STEP FIVE

Let the dough rest for 10 minutes. Then knead, using the heel of your hand (not your fingers) for 6 minutes. (You may have to add some flour while kneading, but be conservative.)

STEP SIX

Put the dough back in the bowl, cover with oil, and then drape a towel over the bowl. Let it rise for at least one hour (but monitor it to make sure it doesn't overflow the bowl.) You can let the dough rise overnight in the fridge (the rising process slows down in cooler temperatures.)

STEP SEVEN

Braid and, if desired, brush with egg wash and add salt and sesame and/or poppy seeds. If you have time, let the loaf rise before you bake it. Bake at 350 until golden brown (30-45 minutes.)