

# No Knead Bread

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(From Breadtopia.com)

## Ingredients

- 3 cups bread flour (I use 1 cup (5 oz.) whole wheat flour and 2 cups (10 1/2 oz.) white bread flour)
- 1/4 tsp. instant yeast
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 cups purified or spring water

## Mixing & Baking Directions

- Mix together the dry ingredients.
- Mix in water until the water is incorporated.
- Cover with plastic and let sit 12-18 hours.
- Dump out on floured surface; press with floured hands into sort of oblong; fold in 1/3s then in half.
- Cover loosely with plastic and rest for 15 minutes.
- Transfer to well-floured proofing basket. (I sprayed lightly with oil then sprinkled wheat germ.)
- Cover with towel and let rise about 1 1/2 hours.
- Bake in covered La Cloche or Dutch oven preheated to 500 degrees for 30 minutes.
- Remove cover; reduce heat to 450 degrees and bake an additional 15 minutes.
- Let cool completely on rack.
- Consume bread, be happy.
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**Note:** Regarding the 15 minute rest after the long proofing period; it's a habit of mine (Breadtopia) from working with "regular" dough where it helps to have the dough rest after folding in order to relax it so it's easier to shape for the final rise. With the wet no knead dough recipes, I've been skipping it and haven't noticed any difference in the results.

## No Knead Revisited – A Three Year Check Up

The original New York Times no knead bread recipe was published in 2006, about the same time Breadtopia was born. By far the most common difficulty people write or call in about is with the dough being too wet to handle at the end of the long first proofing period and also when it's time to place the dough into a covered vessel to bake at the end of the second rise.

When you run into this, there's not a whole lot you can do about it other than attempt to follow through on the instructions and ultimately wrest the dough into your heated baker and into the oven.

Your “mistake” may turn out better than you expected and if nothing else, you’ll learn from it. The next time around you can do one or a combination of a couple things differently.

1. Add more flour and/or use less water than you did the first time. Dough has a way of getting more slack as it sits for many hours so if you start off with the dough being a little stiffer than you think it should be, that’s fine and maybe it’ll be easier to handle later.
2. Consider reducing the long proofing time by several hours. Don’t get stuck on the idea of 18 hours. Depending on your room temperature and humidity, 18 hours may result in over proofing. When dough proofs too long, the gluten breaks down, the yeast loses some oomph and it can just get downright soupy. Most of the time, I find 12-14 hours to be about right (and sometimes even 9-10 hours during very warm weather). If you want or need to prolong the proofing time, but don’t want to risk over proofing, stick the dough in the fridge for several hours or overnight. That will slow things down a lot. Then resume proofing at room temp until it’s ready to bake.

The same principle holds true on the second rise. While 1-2 hours is the suggested range, I’m almost always at about 60 to 75 minutes.

Another concern we hear a lot is about the dough not rising much during that second short proofing period. I don’t see mine rise much then either and it doesn’t matter so long as you see a good rise during the first several minutes that the dough is in the oven. That’s called oven spring and it’s a very good thing. By keeping your proofing periods on the shorter side, you’re more likely to get good oven spring from the still vigorous yeast or sourdough starter.

Of course all of the above is assuming your yeast or sourdough starter is fresh and viable to start with.

In summary, most problems can be helped or solved by stiffening the dough a little and/or shortening the rising times.

If you’re new to bread baking, don’t think from reading this that it’s difficult or tricky to get great results. Most people find it a breeze and enjoy success right out of the blocks. Others may find it takes a few tries. It’s important to have fun with it and don’t worry about bombing. There’s no significant downside to bread baking but the upside can be fabulous. Enjoy!