

Refrigerator Dough For Quick Crusty Hard Rolls

Throw refrigerator dough together in the morning or evening, or whenever you have a few spare moments.

The small amount of yeast allows the dough to keep in the fridge for up to 5 days without developing a "sour" taste. We kept one batch for 6 days; the rolls were a little denser, but still tasted good. Note: If you plan to use the dough within 12 hours or so, knead it and then let it rise at room temperature for 1 hour before refrigerating. — S.G.

4 1/2 cups (19 1/4 ounces) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1 1/2 cups (12 ounces) water
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon instant yeast

Manual /Mixer Method: Combine all of the ingredients and mix till cohesive. Knead the dough, by hand or mixer, about 5 to 10 minutes, till it's soft and somewhat smooth; it should be cohesive, but the surface should still be a bit rough. Place the kneaded dough in a greased bowl, cover it, and refrigerate at least overnight, or for up to 5 days.

Bread Machine Method: Place all of the ingredients into the bucket of your bread machine. Program the machine for dough or manual, and press Start. Check the dough after about 15 minutes; it should be smooth-looking, but very soft. Add additional water or flour as needed. Cancel the machine after the final kneading cycle, and refrigerate the dough as directed previously.

Shaping: Remove the dough from the refrigerator, fold it over gently a few times, and cut off the desired amount; you'll need 1 1/2 to 2 ounces per roll (golf-ball sized pieces); about 1 to 1 1/4 ounces per breadstick (about 1 1/4 inches in diameter); or 10 ounces (one-third of the dough) per baguette. Return any remaining dough to the refrigerator.

Form rolls by shaping the pieces into balls, then rolling them under your lightly cupped fingers on an unfloured work surface.

For breadsticks, roll each piece into a 12-inch rope, keeping the ends blunt (rather than tapered), so they'll bake evenly.

For baguettes, shape the dough into a rough, slightly flattened oval, cover it with greased plastic wrap, and let it rest for 15 minutes. Fold the dough in half lengthwise, and seal the edges with the heel of your hand. Flatten it slightly, and fold and seal again. With the seam-side down, cup your fingers and gently roll the dough into a 14-inch log.

Place the shaped rolls, breadsticks or baguette onto a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet, cover, and let them rise for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, until they're very puffy.

Bake the rolls or the baguette in a preheated 425°F oven for 15 to 18 minutes, till they're golden brown. Bake the breadsticks for 12 to 15 minutes (for soft breadsticks) or, for crisp breadsticks, bake them in a preheated 375°F oven for 25 to 30 minutes. *Yield: 30 ounces of dough, enough for 15 to 20 rolls, 28 12-inch breadsticks, or three baguettes.*