

Perfect Pizza Dough

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups warm water
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon instant yeast
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 - 3 1/2 cups flour (bread flour or all purpose both work great here)

Directions:

In mixing bowl add warm water, sugar and instant yeast. Let sit for 3 minutes or so until sugar and yeast are softened. Since it's instant yeast there is really no need to let it proof like regular yeast (if all you have is regular yeast - let it sit for 5 minutes or so until it's slightly bubbly).

Add salt, oil, and flour and knead in mixer for 3 minutes or by hand for 5-8 minutes. You want the dough to pull away from the sides of the bowl or counter (just don't over flour the dough or it will turn out a little dry and chewy). You'll know the dough is floured well when it pulls from the sides and still has a slight tacky touch to it.

Let dough rest for 10 minutes. Divide dough in two. Makes two 12-14 inch (medium-sized) pizza crusts. Roll into a circle and bake on pizza pan or stone at 500 degrees F for 6-12 minutes with desired sauce, cheese, and toppings. It's done when lightly browned and cheese is bubbly. (The cooking time varies greatly with the thickness of the rolled dough and your oven, so keep a close eye on it the first time and adjust from there if necessary.)

Notes:

This dough freezes great. I freeze it in quart freezer bags with enough dough for one crust. Move from fridge to freezer the morning of or night before you plan to use it. Remove from fridge 30 minutes to an hour before rolling out to allow dough to come to room temperature. .

Recipe Source:

Adapted from Diana King's Breadstick recipe