

Homemade Bagels

2 cups warm water (~110°F)
4 ½ tsp. active dry yeast
3 tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tbsp. salt
about 5 ¾ cups all-purpose flour, unsifted
3 quarts water mixed with 1 tbsp. granulated sugar
cornmeal, for dusting
1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tbsp. water

toppings as desired (sesame seeds, cinnamon-sugar, poppy seeds, etc.)
{for everything topping, I used kosher salt, black pepper, garlic powder, sesame seeds, and poppy seeds - no real measurements, just to taste}}

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer, stir together water and yeast. Let stand 5 minutes, until foaming. Stir in the sugar and salt.
2. Gradually mix in 4 cups of the flour and beat at medium speed for 5 minutes. Add in 1 ¼ cups more flour to make a stiff dough. Continue kneading until smooth, elastic, and no longer sticky, (about 15 minutes); add more flour as needed to prevent sticking - dough should be fairly firm.
3. Place in a greased bowl, cover, and let rise in a warm place until almost doubled (about 1 hour).
4. Punch dough down and divide into thirds. Set ⅔ of dough aside on a floured board; cover with clear plastic. Form remaining ⅓ dough in a log and cut into equal pieces. (For average size store-bought bagels, about 6 equal pieces.)
5. To shape, knead each piece into small ball and poke thumbs through center. With one thumb in hole (hole should be at least ½-inch) work fingers around perimeter, shaping ball into a small doughnut-like shape about 1 ½ inches in diameter. Place bagels on a floured board or tray and let rest 20 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F.
6. Bring water-sugar mixture to a boil in a 4 to 5 quart pan; adjust heat to keep it gently boiling gently. Lightly grease a baking sheet and sprinkle with cornmeal. Lift bagels carefully and drop into water (3-4 at a time, depending on size) boil 30 seconds each side.
7. Lift out with slotted spoon and drain very briefly on paper towels, and place on baking sheet. Brush with egg yolk glaze, sprinkle with desired toppings. Bake for 20 minutes or until richly browned. Cool on racks.
8. Repeat with remaining ⅔ dough (you may need to punch it down before shaping,) working with ⅓ at a time.

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