

Pizza Dough
"Naples at Table," Arthur Schwartz
HarperCollins ©1998

Makes 4 9-10" pizza

1 envelope dried yeast (2-1/2 teaspoons)
1 cup warm water
4 cups unbleached all purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup warm water

Donna note: you can make this by hand, but I use my KitchenAid stand mixer with the dough hook. Instead of purchasing the three small packets of yeast, I purchase a large canister from Costco and keep it refrigerated. It's last a while and comes to about the same price as the three pack.

1. In a 2-cup glass measure, with a table fork, dissolve the yeast in the 1 cup of warm water. Stir in 1/2 cup of the flour, cover with a clean dishtowel and let it stand until the mixture foams up to about double—2 cups—about 30 minutes.
2. In large bowl, combine 3-1/2 cups of the flour with the salt. Stir in the yeast mixture and the remaining 1/2 warm water (see note above). Stir until the dough masses together. Gather the dough into a ball and turn it out onto a lightly floured work surface. Knead, folding and turning the dough, onto itself, then pushing it away from you with the heel of your hand, about 10-12 minutes, adding little by little, just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking. (*Donna note:* Using the stand mixer with dough hook, I let the machine run 10 minutes. Also, instead of adding all of the remaining 1/2 cup of warm water, I add enough just until the dough comes together). Be careful not to add too much flour or too much at one time. When you have finished, the dough should not stick to the board; it should be smooth, silken, slightly damp on the surface and very elastic. Dust the dough lightly all over with flour and place in a bowl to rise, covered with a clean dishtowel, for about 1 hour, or until it has slightly more than doubled in bulk.
3. While the dough is rising, and at least 30 minutes before baking, place in an oven rack on the lowest level, preferably holding a pizza stone, and preheat the oven to 500°. (*Donna note:* I have a Weber Gas Grill with V grates. I preheat the grill on the highest setting. Before placing the pizza on the grill, I lower all burners. Using a pizza peel that has been floured, I transfer the pizza to the gas grill and cook 6-8 minutes.)
4. Punch down the dough and divide into 4 parts. Alternately, if you intend to use only a portion of the dough immediately, form each fourth into a smooth ball and let those to be used immediately rise on a floured board, a couple of inches apart, covered with a dishtowel. Refrigerate or freeze the dough remaining balls in plastic bags.
5. To form the dough into a pizza, flatten the ball of dough into a thick disk. On a lightly floured board, rotating the disk as you go, flatten the center of the pizza with your fingertips or heel of your hand. When a ridge of dough starts appearing on the perimeter of the disk, lift the dough up with both hands, and holding on to the ridge, let gravity and the weight of the dough stretch the circle. Keeping the dough to get a relatively even 10 inch circle. Keep pulling the ridge slightly so the circle gets larger. Be careful not to make the center too thin or the ridge more than 1/2" keep. At some point

the pizza will become too flimsy to handle. Now spread the formed pizza dough onto a large baking sheet or wooden peel that has been lightly dusted with flour.

6. Top as desired
7. Bake for 6 to 8 minutes depending on the oven and how well done you like pizza. The edge should be tinged with brown.

Note: Simple herb and olive oil toppings require less cooking time than tomato or other heavier/moister toppings.