

- Use parchment paper to bake bread.

- $1\frac{5}{8}$ cup water

- Bake ⁴⁵ 30 min with lid on

- Remove lid for last 15 min to achieve softer crust

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Crusty Bread That's Quite Possibly The Best Homemade Bread Ever

Post written by [Sherri](#)

There's just something about the smell of fresh baked crusty bread that makes you feel at home. If you like fresh baked bread but don't like all the elbow grease that goes into it then keep reading. Bread makers were all the rage a few years ago and took a lot of the work out of fresh homemade bread. But what if I told you you could get the best homemade crusty bread ever without needing any gadgets, machines or even kneading the dough?

That's correct, NO KNEADING! The trick is to let time do the work – 24 hours to be exact. This recipe is from an article in the [New York Times](#) from 2006. We've made it at home here a few times and it has been a success every time. This recipe requires very little hands on time as you will see but it's easy and produces the best crusty bread we've had. So here is the recipe you really should give it a try!



Crusty Bread Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour, more for dusting

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon instant yeast

$1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons salt

Cornmeal or wheat bran (optional)

Directions

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt. Add $1\frac{5}{8}$ cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.



2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.



3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.



4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6 to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack. **Yield: One 1½-pound loaf.**

check internal temperature: 205°F when done