

## Neo-Neapolitan Pizza Dough

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5 1/3 cups (24 oz / 680 g) unbleached bread flour  
2 teaspoons (0.5 oz / 14 g) salt  
1 teaspoon (0.11 oz / 3 g) instant yeast  
2 tablespoons (1 oz / 28.5 g) sugar or 1 ½ tablespoons (1 oz / 28.5g) honey  
2 cups plus 2 tablespoons (17 oz / 482 g) water, at room temperature  
2 tablespoons (1 oz / 28.5 grams) olive oil (optional)

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### **Do Ahead – can be done up to 4 days in advance if you are going to refrigerate the dough**

1. Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl. If using a mixer, use the paddle attachment and mix on the lowest speed for 1 minute. If mixing by hand, use a large spoon and stir for about 1 minute, until well blended. The dough should be course and slightly sticky. Cover the bowl with plastic and let the dough rest (autolyse) for 25 minutes to fully hydrate the flour.
2. Switch to the dough hook and mix on medium-low speed, or continue mixing by hand, for 2 to 3 minutes, until the dough is smoother but still soft, supple, and somewhat between tacky and sticky.
3. Spread 1/2 teaspoon of olive oil on a work surface, then use a bowl scraper to transfer the dough to the oiled surface. Rub your hands with the oil on the work surface; then stretch and fold the dough one time, reaching under the front end of the dough, stretching it out, and then folding it back 1/3 of the way onto the top of the dough. Then do the same thing from the back end and then from each side, then flip the dough over and tuck it into a ball. Divide the dough into 5 equal pieces, each weighing about 8 ounces (227 g). If you are going to use this dough for Stromboli, divide the dough into 7 equal pieces. Form each piece into a ball, and then place each into a separate sandwich-size freezer bag misted with spray oil. Seal the bag and refrigerate overnight or for up to 4 days.

### **On Baking Day**

About 90 minutes before you plan to bake the pizzas, place the desired number of dough balls on a lightly oiled work surface. With oiled hands, stretch and round each piece into a tight ball, and then place them on a pan that's been lightly oiled (preferably with olive oil). Loosely cover with plastic wrap and let rest at room temperature until ready to bake.

About 1 hour before baking the pizzas, preheat the oven and a baking stone as high as the oven will go. If you don't have a pizza stone, you can assemble the pizzas on baking sheets covered with parchment paper and bake them on the pans. While the oven is preheating, prepare your cheeses, sauces, and toppings.

When ready to assemble and bake, put about 1 cup (4.5 oz/128g) of flour in a bowl. Use some of it to dust the work surface, your hands, and a pizza peel, if you have one. If you do not have a pizza peel you can use a cookie sheet in its place. Put one of the pizza dough balls in the flour to coat the bottom. Transfer to the work surface and gently tap it down with your fingers to form a disk. Slide the backs of your hands under the dough, then lift it and begin to rotate it, using your thumbs to coax the edges of the dough into a larger circle. At this point the dough is draped over the back of your hands. Don't stretch the dough with the backs of your hands or your knuckles, let your thumbs do all of the work; your hands and knuckles merely provide a platform to support the dough. If the dough starts to resist and shrink back, set it on the floured work surface and let it rest for a minute or two. You can move on to another dough ball, repeating the same gentle stretching. Continue working the dough and resting it as need be until it is about 10 to 12 inches in diameter. It should be thicker at the edges than in the center and the center should be thin but not paper-thin. If the dough rips, you can try to patch it, or you can form it back into a ball, move on to another dough ball, and try again in 15 to 20 minutes.

When the dough is ready to be topped, place it on the floured peel. Use flour rather than cornmeal or semolina, as it doesn't burn as quickly in the oven. Top the pizza as desired, and then slide it onto the baking stone. If you aren't using a baking stone, just put the paned pizza in the oven.

Bake for about 4 minutes, and then use the peel or a spatula to rotate the pizza. It will take anywhere from 5 to 7 minutes for the pizza to fully bake, depending on the oven temperature (convection ovens bake faster). The edge should puff up and be a deep golden brown, perhaps even slightly charred.

Remove the pizza, garnish as desired, and then let it cool for 1 minute before slicing or serving.