

# Classic Formula - Community Loaves - version 3.0

Welcome! A quick reminder, **you are not alone**. We support bakers of all experience levels and even the most experienced may have questions with a new formula. We invite you to check out our baker support resources:

Visit Our Baker FAQs - <https://communityloaves.org/faq-baking-and-donation-support/>

Send An Email To - [bakersupport@communityloaves.org](mailto:bakersupport@communityloaves.org)

Baking Sessions - virtual discussion and bake with me sessions. Check our calendar for upcoming dates: <https://communityloaves.org/ev>

Order Supplies: <https://communityloaves.org/shop/>

How Many 9 x 5 Loaves Are You Baking?

2

Enter # of Loaves

## Ingredients Needed

Preferment (Levain)	Weight	Bakers %
High Extraction Bread Flour, T85 or T90	75 g	50.00%
Whole Grain Bread Flour	75 g	50.00%
Water	150 g	100.00%
Starter (aka sourdough starter)*	16 g	10.67%

Bread	Weight	Bakers %
<b>Flour</b>	<b>780.00 g</b>	<b>100%</b>
High Extraction Bread Flour - T85 or T90	390 g	50.00%
Whole Grain Bread Flour	390 g	50.00%
Water	492 g	63.08%
Salt (Kosher or Fine Sea Salt)	18 g	2.31%
Instant Yeast	4 g	0.51%
Honey or Molasses or split	42 g	5.38%
Olive Oil	30 g	3.85%
Preferment - Levain	316 g	40.51%

### Porridge

Rolled Oats (Not Quick Cooking Oats)	98 g	12.56%
Water	160 g	20.51%

**TOTAL\*\*** **1940.00 g** **229.80%**

\*If making a "same day levain" use 4 times the amount of starter

\*\*Loaf weights average **950-965 g** before bake, fits a 9x5 loaf pan

## Recipe Overview

Enter the number of loaves you would like to make, ingredients adjust automatically. Just getting started? Begin with a 2 loaf

Step	Activity	Time
1	Make Preferment	Overnight
2	Autolyse	2 Hr
3	Oatmeal Porridge	6 min
4	Mix	30-40 min
5	Bulk Ferment	60 min
6	Divide & Pre-Shape	30 min
7	Shape & Proof	45-60 min
8	Bake	35-45 min
9	Cool & Package	Overnight

**Est. Total Active Time @ 6 Hours**

## Video Links:

[Maintaining A Starter](#)

[About Rolled Oats](#)

[Using A Scale](#)

## Classic Formula | Best Practices

Welcome! A quick reminder, **you are not alone**. We support bakers of all experience levels and even the most experienced may have questions with a new formula. We invite you to check out our baker support resources:

**Visit Our Baker FAQs** - <https://communityloaves.org/faq-baking-and-donation-support/>

**Send An Email To** - [bakersupport@communityloaves.org](mailto:bakersupport@communityloaves.org)

**Baking Sessions - virtual discussion and bake with me sessions.** Check our calendar for upcoming dates: <https://communityloaves.org/e>

**Order Supplies:** <https://communityloaves.org/shop/>

**How many loaves should I make?** Bake a quantity of loaves that fits your equipment or physical capacity. The standard recommendation is 4 loaves. Three to donate and one for you and your family to enjoy. But that might not work for your size mixer, kitchen, or maybe you can make more. Make the batch size that works for you and please keep a loaf to nourish you and your family.

**Why we weigh our ingredients?** Consistency is one of our goals. We want everyone to have success with their baking and weight is a universal measurement. Surprisingly cups are not. So to make sure we are all speaking the same recipe language, we weigh our ingredients.

### **Baker Agreements:**

- Use only ingredients specified in the Community Loaves recipe.
- Wash your hands and keep your work surface clean.
- Pull long hair back or even better, regardless of hair length, wear a cap, like a ball cap to prevent unwanted hair from falling into your baked goods.
- Make sure loaves are thoroughly baked, nice brown coloring all the way around, and a hollow sound when you gently thump on the bottom.
- Seek assistance through our FAQs or email us (see links at top of page)
- All bread formulas and related materials (including but not limited to handouts, videos, web content), processes or practices are copyrighted materials and the property of our nonprofit Community Loaves.

### **Flour Fundraiser - We Support Bakers:**

Supporting our once-a-month flour fundraiser helps keep our program growing. Bakers receive a sizeable discount on freshly milled professional flours. You can order a wide variety of flours, and flour makes a great gift! (Order link at top of page)



### **Formula Guidance**

- Set the batch size on the first sheet - Batch Size & Ingredients
- Print the step-by-step third sheet or use the companion PDF.
- [Learn more about maintaining a Sourdough Starter](#)

## Classic Formula | Step-by-Step

The Classic Formula is a delicious formula combining a natural sourdough starter for flavor and commercial yeast for reliable performance. The combination produces a consistent and flavorful loaf. Select this formula if you have an existing active sourdough starter. (Note you can order starter for free on the community loaves website.) Bread making is greatly influenced by temperature. You can be successful with this formula without concerning yourself with Desired Dough Temp (DDT). However, cooler environments and ingredients will cause these steps to take a little longer and warmer temperatures can reduce the total time for each step. For those of you working with DDT 75-85 is a nice target window.

An additional variable to temperature, the number of loaves you are making changes the amount of time at each step. Two loaves mixes up more quickly than six. In all cases, video links help provide instruction when you are uncertain.

### Step 1 | Make Preferment (Levain)

---

**Why this step?** Prefermented flour is more digestible and adds flavor. Complete this step the night before you want to bake.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Bowl, cover, mixing spoon

Ingredients | Flour, Water, Active Sourdough Starter

### Instructions

---

- Weigh out flour, water and starter
- Mix thoroughly, insure all flour is thoroughly incorporated.
- Cover and let sit on counter overnight. It will double in size in a bowl or suitable container.
- For example - Mix preferment at 10:00 pm, it will be ready to use at 8:00 - 10:00 am.

### Video Links:

---

[Mixing Your Levain](#)

[Using A Scale](#)

[Maintaining A Starter](#)

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 5 minutes to weigh & mix.

**Overnight Time:** 10-12 hours

### Tips

---

- You need an active sourdough starter for this recipe.
- You know you have an active starter when it predictably doubles in size within 4-6 hours of feeding.
- One reason we use such a small amount of sourdough starter in our levain is that it has several hours to "dine" on the fresh flour. It will be ready after an overnight of eating.
- Same Day Levain - you can make a rapid levain by increasing the amount of starter by 4x. Mix in the morning and it will be ready to use within 4-6 hours.



## Step 2 | Autolyse

---

**Why this step?** The whole point of autolyzing is to hydrate the flour. This kick-starts enzymatic activity and gluten development and thus reduces mixing time. If you are short on time, just 30 minutes yields 80% of the benefit. Maximum benefit achieved at 2 hours.

## Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Bowl, Cover, Bowl Scraper

Ingredients | Flour, Water

## Instructions

---

- Weigh out flour and water, (if temping, water target 75-90 degrees.)
- Gently mix by hand, cutting in the flour with a bowl scraper and rotating the bowl as you lift the flour from the bottom and incorporate the water.
- You'll be tempted to think it isn't enough water. It is. It will come together and take on a shaggy appearance.
- Once all the flour is incorporated, COVER, and let the magic of gluten development unfold.
- Autolyse for a minimum of 30 min- to 2 hours, minimum 30 minutes. Maximum benefit at 2 hours and some flour degradation if you go over 2 hours.

## Video Links:

---

[Autolyse](#)

## Time

---

**Active Time:** 10 minutes to weigh & mix.

**Resting Time:** 30 min - 2 Hours

## Tips

---

- Think about coating the flour.

- A bowl scraper works better than a mixing spoon.

- Although you can do this in your mixer, I recommend using a separate bowl. In Step 4 you want to layer the preferment in the bottom of the mixing bowl first. (Difficult to do if the autolyse got there first.)

- Optimum benefit is at 2 hours, but if life interrupts, don't all is not lost. Go ahead and use your autolyse. Up to 6 hours fine.



### Step 3 | Prepare Oatmeal Porridge

---

**Why this step?** The oatmeal porridge is one of the many reasons our pan loaf is delicious and nutritious. Oatmeal adds softness, flavor, and fiber. The honey and olive oil help with shelf stability.

#### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Bowl, Spoon/Spatula, Sheet Tray

Ingredients | Rolled Oats, Water, Honey or Molasses and Olive Oil

#### Instructions

---

- Weigh out oats, water, honey or molasses, and olive oil
- Combine water and rolled oats. Microwave 3-6 minutes or cook on stove top. Stir to incorporate any remaining uncooked flakes.
- When cooked, remove from heat and immediately add the oil and honey/molasses to the oatmeal, it prevents the porridge from clumping.
- Set aside to cool. You do not want to add hot oatmeal to your bread mix. To cool more quickly, spread the hot oatmeal out on a baking sheet.
- You can do this entire step the night before. Cover, the porridge after it cools, and rest on counter or place in refrigerator. (If you refrigerate, take out first thing in the am to allow to come to room temperature prior to use.)

#### Video Links:

---

[The Oatmeal Porridge](#)

#### Time

---

**Active Time:** Takes 3-6 minutes in a microwave. A little longer on the stove top.

**Resting Time:** 30-40 minutes to cool

#### Tips

---

- Not all microwaves are equal. High power for a new machine may require much less time.

- A small batch of oatmeal (1-2 loaves) will take less time to cook than a larger batch.

- Avoid Instant or Quick Cooking oats. Rolled oats are whole flakes that cook and hydrate differently.

- It may appear as if more water is needed. There is enough. If there are a few uncooked flakes, just stir them into the hot cooked portion.



### About Step 4 | A Guide To The Art of Mixing

---

- Regardless of how you are going to mix your dough, by hand, by spiral mixer (KitchenAid) or by roller bar (Ankarsrum), the goal is the same, **full gluten development**. Pass the windowpane test and you are on your way to a delicious loaf of bread.
- There are many pathways to a great mix. Experienced bakers, feel free to make changes in the method proposed based on your personal success. If you are new to baking bread, watch the videos that match your chosen mix method. Follow the recipe guidance first before attempting new processes.
- Most home bakers under mix, judging the process by the amount of time that has passed instead of the characteristics of the developed dough. Instead of watching time, mix/knead your dough until it passes a **windowpane test**. If it doesn't pass, keep mixing until it does.
- Total mixing time is influenced by the number of loaves you are trying to mix.

#### Tips

---

- Water is your friend. Dough may be sticky, avoid adding flour, instead coat hands lightly with water.
- Layering in the yeast and salt as separate steps helps you see and feel the development at each stage. The addition of the salt helps accelerate gluten tightening.

#### Video Links

---

- [A Beautiful Loaf](#)
- [Windowpane Test](#)

#### By Hand - Best for 1-3 Loaf Batch

---



- This is a workout. The more loaves you are trying to mix the more physical it is. This method works best with a 1-3 loaf batch size.
- Hands are sensitive instruments, you can literally feel the dough. For example, you can feel the yeast and salt granules before they dissolve into the dough. You can also feel and experience the dough strengthening as you knead.
- Slap and fold is a classic method. YouTube additional examples of this process. Developing the dough before adding the oatmeal porridge avoids it splattering all over your kitchen.

#### By KitchenAid - Batch Size 2-6 Depending On Bowl Capacity

---



- Smaller artisan mixers can handle 1-3 loaves. Larger 6, 7, 8 quart machines can accommodate 3-4 loaves.
- KitchenAids are great but they can sometimes struggle with bread. Keep the speed low, speed 2. If your mixer is getting hot, stop and rest for two minutes or more, then resume. Watch the video created on "Being Kind To Your Machine".
- Riding the hook. This is something that happens. Even "Modernist Bread" indicates this is a natural KitchenAid issue. You can reduce this tendency by limiting the batch size to 60%-70% of the bowl capacity. Otherwise just stop the mix and pull the creeping dough off, then resume.

#### By Ankarsrum - Batch Size 5-6 loaves

---



- The new kid on the block, and an emerging favorite by many Community Loaves bakers, has been mixing bread in home kitchens for over 50 years.
- The mixer can easily mix 5-6 loaves. I do six.
- You want to use the roller bar and take a moment to watch the 6-loaf video.

### Step 4 | Mix By Hand

---

**Why this step?** Mixing & kneading, this is the most critical step. It is all about ingredient incorporation and gluten development. Pass the windowpane test and you're done mixing.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Large mixing bowl, bowl scraper, bench scraper, timer (optional), finger bowl  
Ingredients | Preferment, Autolyse, Additional Instant Yeast, Salt, Oatmeal Porridge

### Instructions

---

- Begin with the preferment in the bottom of a large mixing bowl. Using your hands, pinch off small chunks of the autolyse, about the size of a racquetball, and drop them on top of the preferment.
- Using a "pincer" like method and/or your bowl scraper work the two different elements together into a cohesive, evenly textured dough. Changing your motion to a gentle lifting and stretching method, while rotating the bowl, to incorporate the preferment cohesively.
- Once everything is blended together and no pockets of loose preferment or chunky autolyse remain, work in the yeast. Pinching it in at the beginning and then shifting to a gentle lifting and stretching motion. Once the yeast is fully incorporated, work in the salt in the same way. You can wet your hands lightly and periodically if that helps get the salt worked in or if the dough is sticking to you.
- Once the salt is worked in. Begin kneading using a slap and fold method. Remove dough from the bowl. Use your counter and arm strength to develop the bread gluten. Length and time of the manual slap and fold can vary by energy level of the baker. (You don't need to be too aggressive. If this technique is new to you, I recommend watching the video.) You are approximating the revolutions of the mixer, 1000 turns. But it won't take 1000 and you do not need to count.
- Keep kneading until this dough can pass a windowpane test. See video
- Once you pass the windowpane test, return the dough to the bowl. Now add the porridge - pinching it in, folding it in, kneading it in, inside the bowl. Your goal, even distribution of the oatmeal and a cohesive dough. Keep kneading, in the bowl or return to slap and fold until a fully cohesive dough is restored. 📺

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 20-35 min.  
depends on  
pace and  
strength

### Video Links

[Hand Mixing](#)

[Windowpane Test](#)



### Step 4 | Mix By Machine - KitchenAid Style

---

**Why this step?** Mixing & kneading, this is the most critical step. It is all about ingredient incorporation and gluten development. Pass the windowpane test and you're done mixing.

Choose a batch size that makes sense for your size of KitchenAid. **Watch the Be Kind To Your Machine Video** for helpful tips.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | KitchenAid style mixer, bowl scraper, dough hook, finger bowl, timer (optional)  
Ingredients | Preferment, Autolyse, Additional Yeast, Salt, Oatmeal Porridge

### Instructions

---

- Begin with the preferment in the bottom of your mixer's mixing bowl. Using your hands, pinch off small chunks of the autolyse, about the size of a racquetball, and drop them on top of the preferment.
- Place bowl on stand mixer and with the dough hook attached, mix on low speed, speed 2. Mix until the dough consistency is even throughout and no pockets of loose preferment or chunky autolyse remain. It is easiest to feel this with your hands. 3-4 minutes.
- Now add the yeast to the bowl. Resume mixing on speed 2. Mix until the yeast is fully incorporated. When you feel the dough, there should be no grittiness from the yeast.
- Now add the salt. Still keeping to speed 2. If your KitchenAid starts to get hot, stop mixing, give the machine a two minute break, then resume. Keep mixing, approximately 15-25 minutes until the dough can pass the windowpane test.
- Perform a windowpane test when you think you might be done. If it passes you're done, if not, keep mixing.
- Now add the oatmeal porridge. Stay on low speed until mixed in and then shift to medium speed - 2 on a KitchenAid. (Avoid the urge to go faster.) Total time on second speed can vary, another 3-6 minutes. The goal is to fully incorporate the oatmeal porridge. No pockets of oatmeal tucked inside the dough and a nice web of fully incorporated oatmeal. Then we're done with mixing.

\*\*KitchenAid recommends using speed 2 for mixing bread. Consult your specific machine's manual for guidance and take breaks if your machine begins to overheat.☹️

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 20-35 minutes



### Video Links

---

[KitchenAid Mix](#)

[Windowpane Test](#)

[KitchenAid Mix - Be Kind To Your Machine](#)





### Step 4 | Mix By Machine - Ankarsrum

---

**Why this step?** Mixing & kneading, this is the most critical step. And it is all about ingredient incorporation and gluten development. Pass the windowpane test and you're done mixing.

#### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Ankarsrum mixer, bowl scraper, roller bar, timer (optional)

Ingredients | Preferment, Autolyse, Additional Yeast, Salt, Oatmeal Porridge

#### Instructions

---

- Set up your Ankarsrum, dough scraper, and roller bar. Tighten the roller bar in place leaving a 1/2" space distance from the side of the bowl.
- Using your bowl scraper, transfer your preferment to the Ank bowl, you want the liquid or loose ingredients in the bowl first. Now, using your hands pinch off small chunks of the autolyse, about the size of a racquetball, dropping them on top of the preferment. Begin on low speed 12:00 o'clock, Ankarsrums have a one gear - variable speed system. Straight up, or 12:00 is the slowest speed.
- Beginning on low speed turn on the Ank, rightside knob. Turn "on" power, leftside knob. It is both power and timer with a maximum run time of 12 minutes. Gradually increase the speed towards 3:00 to 4:00 o'clock. Mix until the dough consistency is even throughout and no pockets of loose preferment or chunky autolyse remain. It is easiest to feel this with your hands. (Estimate 4-6 minutes.)
- Add yeast to the bowl. Remember to start slow, 12:00 o'clock then increase speed, max 4:00 o'clock. Mix until the yeast is fully incorporated. When you feel the dough, there should be no grittiness from the yeast. (Estimate 2-3 minutes)
- Add the salt. Again beginning at 12:00 o'clock and increasing speed, max 4:00 o'clock. Keep mixing, approximately 15-25 minutes until the dough can pass the windowpane test. (Perform a windowpane test when you think you might be done.) If it passes you're right, if not, keep mixing.
- Now add the oatmeal porridge. I like to add this gradually, about 1/3 of the porridge at a time. Always beginning at slow speed and then gradually getting faster. The goal is to fully incorporate the oatmeal porridge. No pockets of oatmeal tucked inside the dough and a nice web of oatmeal fully incorporated. Then we're done with mixing.

#### Time

---

**Active Time:** 20-35 minutes

#### Video Links

---

[Ankarsrum 6 Loaves](#)

[Ankarsrum 2 Loaves](#)

[Windowpane Test](#)



### Step 5 | Bulk Ferment (Primary Fermentation)

---

**Why this step?** This process begins at the completion of mixing and ends when we divide and shape the dough. The bulk fermentation builds strength, volume and flavor. A simple fold halfway through the bulk helps the baker check in on the dough, encourage a little more dough strength, move microbes around and even out dough temperature in the event the top of the bowl is warmer than the bottom or vice versa.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Large enough vessel for the dough to rise 1 1/2 - 2x in size, cover or lid, bowl scraper

### Instructions

---

- Transfer the dough into a suitably sized container. One with the capacity for the amount of dough plus room to grow by 1 1/2 to 2 times. Cover the container to protect from drying out.
- Keep in a warm place. Any location that is 70-85 degrees is perfect.
- 30 minutes into the bulk phase, give the dough a fold. Gently loosen the dough from the sides of the container using a moistened bowl scraper or moistened hands. Now complete the following motion four times: again use two wet hands if the dough is sticky. Beginning with the side farthest from you, lift it up and over to the side nearest your body. Rotate your container 180°, wet your hands again if necessary, and repeat the same stretch and fold. Now, rotate the container a quarter turn. Again, lift the side of the dough farthest from you up and over to the side of the container nearest your body. Rotate the bowl 180° and perform the same fold one final time. I like to finish by gently lifting the dough from the center allowing the ends to fold under, and tidying up the middle of the dough in the process.

### Video Links:

---

[Stretch & Fold](#)

### Recommended Reading:

---

[Bulk Fermentation Explained](#)

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 5 minutes

**Resting Time:** 1 Hour



### Tips

---

- Washable & reusable bowl covers are a dream. Help us reduce our plastic waste.

- Square containers can make it easier to stretch and fold each side.

- Multiple ways to "complete" a fold in the dough - use any method you prefer.

### Step 6 | Divide & Pre-Shape

---

**Why this step?** Dividing helps ensure equal size loaves. Preshaping gives us one extra chance to add strength to our dough and create a nice smooth skin. If your divided dough feels a little loose or slack, you can give it a slightly tighter preshape. There are many approaches a baker can take to pre-shaping. Some people like to pull the dough together tightly and let it rest with the seam facing up. Others gently gather the dough and let it rest seam-side-down. I prefer seam side down and medium tightness.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Bench Scraper, scale, tea towel, bowl scraper  
Ingredients | Flour for dusting

### Instructions

---

- Using a bowl scraper, gently loosen the dough from the sides of the bowl.
- Lightly dust your kitchen work surface with flour and if you wish, you can lightly, very lightly, dust the top of the dough before inverting to your counter.
- Using your bench scraper, divide your dough into "x" equal size pieces. Use a scale to help keep you informed.
- Your target loaf weight is between 910-940 g each. The number of portions depends on your batch size. 4 loaves, means four pieces. 6 loaves, 6 pieces
- Once you have your divided portions, shape them into a round boule. Using your bench scraper and free hand, gently fold the bottom of the dough over the sticker top part. Coax the top to the bottom. Working in a round and using the edge of your free hand, pull the round against the counter, creating a little tension and a taught dough skin. Be gentle with this process. Once you've got the shape, use the bench scraper to relocate, seam side down on a lightly dusted part of your counter top.
- When all preshaping is completed cover with a tea towel, rest for 20 minutes.

### Video Links:

---

[Divide & Preshape](#)

### Recommended Reading:

---

[Preshaping Bread Dough](#)

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Resting Time:** 20 minutes

### Tips

---

- When doing a batch of multiple loaves, you divide the dough into roughly equal weight. It doesn't have to be exact, but within 20-40 grams is a nice tolerance.
- I preshape my loaves into boules and using a bench scraper as my right hand helps with tension and reducing stickiness.



## Step 7 | Shape Loaves & Proof (Secondary Fermentation)

**Why this step?** Shaping a loaf for a pan gives it its signature sandwich shape. The second rise, proof, is an extension of yeast fermentation and the final step before baking. The term proofing bread came from the idea that the dough “proves” that it’s risen enough to bake. During the final rise, gas fills the air pockets, stretching the gluten to expand. The bread rises due to the gas forcing the bread upwards.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

Equipment | Bench Scraper, Tea Towel, 9 x 5 Loaf Pans, Spray Bottle

Ingredients | Rolled Oats for Garnish, Pan Spray (Not Butter)

### Instructions

- Grease your 9x5 pans with pan spray, do not use butter.
- Very lightly dust your work surface with flour. Using your bench scraper invert one of the dough pieces so the top side is face down on your work surface.
- Using the flat pads of your fingers, not the finger tips, gently press and coax the round into approx. a 9 x 13 inch rectangle. This does not need to be exact or have perfect corners. You can lift the edges and corners to help guide into place. Your goal an even thickness throughout the rectangle, about 1/2" less.
- Take the top portion of the rectangle and fold it towards you about 1/3. Like a letter. Then fold the bottom portion up and over that first fold, just shy of lining up the edges. Give it a little pat and press to reinforce. Now turn this 90 degrees so the short end is pointed towards.
- Roll. Beginning at the top, using the flat part of your hands, lift the dough and slowly roll down. Create some surface tension by pushing away from you as you complete each roll and before repositioning your hands. When you complete rolling, crimp the bottom seam with the heel of your hand and the sides with your fingers.
- Place your finished loaf, seam side down in the prepared pan. Do not worry if it is shorter than the length of the pan. It will fill in during proofing. Repeat for remaining dough balls.
- Now spritz the top of all the shaped loaves with water and sprinkle an oatmeal garnish on top, gently pressing on the oatmeal so it adheres to the loaf.
- Cover with a tea towel to proof. • Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

### Video Links:

[Shaping & Proofing A Pan Loaf](#)

### Recommended Reading:

[Shaping A Pan Loaf Proofing](#)

### Time

**Active Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Proofing Time:** 45 - 75 minutes

### Tips

- Proofing is a difficult step to master. Finding the "Goldilocks" moment takes some time and experience.

- Signs of a well "proved" loaf? Nicely domed above the pan, marshmallow feel/density, when you poke the loaf with your index finger it fills back in slowly and not all the way.

- Signs of under and over proofing. Over-proofed dough has proofed too long and the gluten network stretched too thin. When poked, it collapses. All is not lost, you can reshape an overproofed loaf, and proof again..

- This step moves along quicker in the heat and slower when its cold.



### Step 8 | Bake

---

**Why this step?** This isn't cookie dough. Bread is better baked!

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Preheated Oven, Cooling Racks, Oven Mitts

### Instructions

---

- Place your bread in a pre-heated oven (425 degrees) and **reduce temperature** to 375 degrees.
- Set timer for 25 minutes, the loaves will not be finished baking but it is a good idea to check in on them. If the tops are cooking too quickly or unevenly you can rotate the loaves or cover them with a loose piece of aluminum foil.
- Loaves are finished baking around 40-50 minutes. They will smell done, feel lighter in weight, have a nice golden brown color all the way around the loaf.
- If tops are done but not the bottoms, you can remove from the tin and place the loaf directly on the rack of the oven. Just for 2-3 more minutes to help the bottoms brown up.
- When done, remove from oven, remove from pans and place on a cooling rack.
- Cool for 24 hours before packaging

### Video Links:

---

[Checking in on the Bake](#)

### Time

---

**Baking Time:** 35-50 minutes

**Resting Time:** 24 hours

### Tips

---

- Ovens vary. They can have hot spots, cool spots. You may need to rotate your loaves half way through the bake.

- Place aluminum foil over the tops if they are getting too dark

- Loaves are delicious and donatable regardless of a side seam crack or a divot or two



### Step 9 | Cool, Package, Donate or Freeze

---

**Why this step?** Admittedly this could be combined with the previous step but it helps me reinforce the necessity of making sure loaves are completely cool before you package them.

### Equipment & Ingredients Needed

---

Equipment | Community Loaves Packaging Kits

### Instructions

---

- The day after your bake, go ahead and package up the loaves.
- When labeling your bags, the hands of the logo point to the opening of the bread bag. Place the base of the label 3 1/2" - 4" from the bottom of the bag. This helps everything look beautiful at the food pantry.
- No bare hand contact at this point. Use tongs to place the loaf in the bread bag.
- Squeeze as much air as you can and then twist tie tightly at the base.
- Set aside to take to your hub for donation Sunday
- Or if a mid-week bake, package and place in your freezer for a future donation date.

### Video Links:

---

[Packaging](#)

### Recommended Reading:

---

*Coming Soon:* Best Practices for freezing

### Time

---

**Active Time:** 15 minutes

**Resting Time:** 24 hours

### Tips

---

- The packaging kits come with pressure adhesive labels. They stick better if you place a weight on them and **let the label "cure"** for an hour or so before using.

- I like to make all 20 kits up at the same time, then I'm ready for a couple of rounds.



## Equipment We Love

You can bake delicious bread without a bunch of fancy equipment. There are a few items that are essential, like a scale and 9x5 pans. We've included here items that bring many of us BreaderTogether bakers joy. Some of these items, those that are on our website shopping cart help fund our efforts. We greatly appreciate your support.

### Essential Items

---

- **Scale** - Bakers weigh their ingredients for accuracy. For loaf consistency we do to! You can find scales many places including second hand shops. They range in price from \$25 to \$55. Our favorite for durability and its pull out reader is the Oxo Good Grips 11 lb scale.

- **9 x 5 x 2.75 Loaf Pan (1.25 lb)** - You want to have enough of these pans to accomplish your baking goals. If you are baking 4 loaves at a time, you'll need 4 pans.

You can find loaf pans many places. Do watch out for different sizes, if you pans are larger or smaller than indicated you'll need to adjust the bread formula to accommodate.

Our favorite pan is a USA 1.25 lb pan and we're are fortunate to make these available to our bakers for a discounted price. It is a member only benefit. They are a commercial grade pan that typically retails for \$22 on Amazon. You can purchase these pans through the Community Loaves Order Supplies link.

- **A bench scraper**, sometimes called a bench knife, a dough scraper, or any number of other variations, is a flat, rectangular piece of steel with a handle along one edge. In short, it's like the chef's knife of the baking world, the tool that, if that's your line of work, you hold in your hand more than any other. Great for dividing and shaping loaves and a real friend when it comes time to clean up your counters.

- **A flexible bowl scraper** - seems like you can never have enough of these handy tools. A flexible bowl scraper helps you get every bit of an ingredient out of the bowl. Waste not, want not and of course you can help support Community Loaves with our logo'd version.

### To Purchase

---

[Amazon](#)



[Community Loaves](#)



[Amazon](#)



[Community Loaves](#)



\*As an Amazon Affiliate, Community Loaves earns from qualifying purchases made through the links in this

# Equipment We Love

## Non Essential But Nice To Have Items

- **Reuseable Bowl Caps**
- **Breader Together Hat** - What a great way to support our bread mission, share the great news about our program and keep your hair out of the dough!
- **Breader Together Apron** - Wear this smart looking apron while baking up a difference. Aprons are machine washable in cold water and tumble dry low.
- **Ankarsrum Kitchen Assistant** - We have a very special arrangement with Bread Beckers based in Atlanta Georgia. Bread Beckers has been educating bakers on the value of whole grain baking and nutrition for decades. In support of our work they provide a unique discount on the Ankarsrum Mixer to our volunteer bakers. Follow the link to learn how you can save \$100 on a new mixer and at the same time Bread Beckers will donate \$100 to our non-profit. That's win/win!
- **KitchenAid Stand Mixer**

## To Purchase

[Community Loaves](#)



[Community Loaves](#)



[Community Loaves](#)



\*As an Amazon Affiliate, Community Loaves earns from qualifying purchases made through the links in this