



Pizza Making with Rob Zorch, '07

Ingredients

Dough:

- .12 oz (approximately .7 teaspoons) active dry yeast (prefer fresh cake yeast but active dry is easier to find and works well)
 - if using fresh cake yeast, multiply the active dry yeast weight by 3
- 17.4 oz (2 1/8 cup) warm/hot water (around 80-90 degrees)
- 28 oz (approximately 6 cups) bread flour (King Arthur recommended)
- .4 oz (approximately 1 ½ teaspoons) sugar
- .7 oz (approximately 3 teaspoons) salt
- .4 oz (approximately 2 tablespoons) olive oil

Note: The ounces mentioned above are based on weight if using a food scale, which is recommended.

Sauce:

- 1 28 oz can of crushed tomatoes (Bianco Dinapoli, Sclafani, and Jersey Fresh recommended; Cento is easiest to find and works well)
- .2 oz (approx. 1 teaspoon) sugar
- .2 oz (approx. 1 teaspoon) salt
- 1 crushed clove fresh garlic
- A pinch of dried oregano
- 1 fresh basil leaf

Toppings:

- Small handful of romano cheese
- Small handful of parmesan cheese
- Approximately 8 oz (1 cup) whole milk mozzarella for 16-inch pizza (NOT pre-shredded, Boar's Head is easy to get in grocery store delis)
- As much pepperoni as you prefer (Ezzo recommended, but it is hard to get; Hormel or Boar's Head sticks will work well- not pre-sliced)

Recommended tools:

- Large pizza stone or pizza steel (Baking Steel brand recommended) to fit in your oven
- If you don't want to use a stone, a pizza screen or pizza discs (LloydPans recommended)
- Wooden pizza peel (16 inches) or a GI Metal perforated metal pizza peel
- Bench scraper
- Digital kitchen scale
- Mixing bowls
- Stand mixer
- Immersion blender
- Pizza cutter
- Cutting board

Directions

1. Preheat oven as hot as it will go, placing stone in oven while preheating. Recommend preheating for around 1 hour. If using pizza screen, preheat oven as normal prior to cooking pizza.
2. Mix yeast and water. Set aside.
3. Mix dry ingredients for dough - flour, salt, and sugar.
4. After yeast starts to bubble in water, add the dry dough ingredients to the water/yeast mixture.
5. Begin to mix dough with either a stand mixer with a knead attachment or a wooden spoon. If using mixer, knead at low setting for around 5 minutes. If using a wooden spoon, once dough ingredients are blended, add oil and begin to knead by hand. Knead for about 5 minutes.
6. If using a stand mixer, once dough is kneaded, pour oil into side of bowl. Let it mix into a ball shape for about 5 more minutes.
7. Once dough has formed into ball shape, cut into three equal chunks. Each ball should be around 16 oz, if using a food scale. If you want to make smaller pizzas, use a 1:1 ratio of the size in oz of dough balls to the size of inches you want your pizzas to be. For example, if you want a 10" pizza, cut it into 10 oz balls.
8. Roll each ball into a bowl like shape, sealing the bottom fully so that the ball has an outer "skin" of sorts to keep moisture and air locked in. This will also prevent the dough from rising too much. (Reference the video, around the 25-minute mark, for assistance!)
9. Either let dough rest in a bowl on the counter for around 1 hour or until it's almost doubled in size. OR place dough in round bowl/Tupperware, lightly coat with oil, and cover/seal in the fridge for two days, depending on when you'd like to make the pizza. See notes below on freezing the dough.
10. While dough is resting, or before you pull it out of the fridge, make the sauce. Mix together the canned, crushed tomatoes, a pinch of oregano, the basil leaf, garlic, salt, and sugar in a bowl. Use an immersion blender or conventional blender to puree the sauce until your desired consistency. It should be smooth but still have some texture to it.
11. You can also prepare your toppings at this time. Shred cheese with a box grater and cut pepperoni, if needed.
12. When ready to prepare your pizza, cover your surface in flour, including your peel, if using one. Put flour into a bowl large enough to hold your ball of dough, then place the dough in the bowl and flip it twice, covering the ball with flour. If your dough was in the fridge, make sure it sits out on the counter and gets to room temperature prior to stretching.
13. Start to flatten out the dough on your floured surface, gradually spreading it and making a crust around the edges with your hands. Gently massage air bubbles from the center of the pizza out towards the crust.
14. Stretch the dough by picking it up and using your fists to twist and stretch it until you've spread it out to your desired thickness.
15. Place the stretched dough on a peel or a pizza disk, depending on the tools you're using. You can stretch the dough out to fit on the surface or pinch any tears in the dough closed at this time. If using a peel, work fast once the dough is placed on the peel!

16. Prepare the pizza on the peel or the pizza desk by spreading out approximately 6 oz of sauce with a ladle. A flat bottom ladle is preferred. Make sure you don't weigh down the middle of the pizza with too much sauce!
17. Sprinkle romano, parmesan, and mozzarella evenly on the pizza. If using pepperoni, place it on the pizza at this time.
18. If using a peel, make sure the pizza is loose enough to slide off onto the pizza stone. Then gently but quickly slide the prepared pizza onto your stone in the oven. If using a disk, place the disk directly on the oven rack.
19. Bake the pizza for approximately 7-10 minutes, depending on the cooking surface and your oven temperature. If baking on a stone or steel, pizza should cook in about 7 minutes, using a screen will take 10.
20. Finish the pizza with grated parmesan, and enjoy!

Notes:

- Wegmans has great pepperoni you can purchase directly from the pizza counter.
- If you make three balls of dough but only wish to eat one right away, let all three rise (whether in the fridge for two days or on the counter for about an hour), and freeze the dough you don't want to use right away. Make sure to wrap it tightly.
- Do not use pre-shredded cheese or pre-cut pepperoni, unless it's cut at a deli onsite.
- For toppings, pre-cook any meats other than cured meat, like pepperoni or salami. Pre-cook all vegetable toppings, other than spinach, and let them cool uncovered in the fridge prior to using.
- If using a peel, the smaller the pizza, the less chance of mishap when trying to slide onto your pizza stone or steel!
- If using a peel and dough seems stuck prior to sliding, gently lift and blow under pizza (if you're preparing the pizza for yourself and not commercially). You can use half regular flour and half semolina flour when flouring the peel to help prevent sticking.
- If prepping dough two days ahead of time and using fridge fermentation technique, make sure dough hasn't over proved before prepping pizza. It should have a fruity, yeasty smell, not sour, and shouldn't be bubbly.
- If you have leftover pizza sauce, you can cook it and add some tomato paste and vegetables to make a great pasta sauce.
- If making a gluten free pizza, Bob's Red Mill crust is recommended. It is difficult to sub gluten free flour for regular as it's not a one for one transaction.
- The dough recipe is based on percentages, which is why a food scale is helpful when determining weights of each dough ingredient.
- If using a GI Metal perforated metal pizza peels, you can prep the pizza on a cutting board or counter and then slide the peel under the pizza. That's what Rob uses on the truck!

A few resources:

- [Serious Eats](#) has some great pizza recipes, especially those by Chef J. Kenji Lopez-Alt
- Check out Vice's [The Pizza Show](#)
- Meet [Norma Knepp](#)!
- Use a pizza dough calculator to determine weights for dough ingredients, if interested. Rob recommends Tom Lehmann's dough calculator.