

Soy-Honey White Bread

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A Few Preliminaries

An all-purpose white bread made with honey and some soy flour and baked in a loaf pan. I've been making this bread for about 15 years. This bread has excellent keeping qualities. It also freezes well.

The recipe makes 3 pounds of dough so you'll have enough for two large loaves or two medium loaves plus extra for a mini-loaf or rolls.

The instructions call for first making a *sponge* (flour, water and yeast mixed together to form a thick batter). The bread has three risings: [1] the sponge, [2] the final dough in the bowl and [3] the shaped loaves in the pan.

You can make this bread entirely by hand if you wish. If you have a mixer, even a hand-held one, you can use it for the sponge and the initial steps of the final dough. A stand mixer with a dough hook serves for all stages. Instructions are given for all approaches.

Everyone measures flour slightly differently so if you're measuring by volume, the amount of flour you use may not be the same as the amount I use. To make sure we're all on the same page before we begin, here's how I convert flour from OZ to CUPS using the "scoop into a measuring cup and level off" method (note: I use the symbol ~ as an abbreviation for "about")

White Flour (Bread or All-Purpose) By Weight and By Volume

OZ	CUPS
8.0	~ 1-2/3 cups
4.5	~ 1 cup
4.0	~ 2/3 to 3/4 cup

Ingredients

This recipe makes 3 pounds of dough.
You may rely on the *weight* measurements and scale the recipe if you wish.

Sponge

	OZ	Volume
Bread flour	16	~ 3-1/2 cups
Water	16	~ 2 cups
Yeast	0.11	~ 1 tsp instant yeast
		OR
		~ 1-1/4 tsp active dry [AD] yeast

Final Dough

	OZ	Volume
Sponge	32.11	all of the sponge
Bread flour	12	~ 2-1/2 cups to 2-2/3 cup
Soy flour	3	~ 1 cup.....full fat soy flour preferred
Oil	2	~ 1/4 cup.....any flavorless oil; I use corn oi
Honey	2	~ 3 TBS
Salt	0.3	~ 2 level tsp

Baker's Percentage Formula

	Percent	
Bread flour*	100.00%	*includes flour in sponge
Water	57.14%	
Soy flour	10.71%	

Oil	7.14%
Honey	7.14%
Salt	1.07%
Yeast	0.39%

Instructions

Sponge

Measure/weigh the flour and put in your mixing bowl.

If using instant yeast, add it to the flour in your mixing bowl and stir it in.

Measure/weigh the water in a separate container.

If using AD yeast, add it to the water and stir it in. Let it dissolve (about 5 minutes).

Add water to flour. Mix/beat until a thick batter is formed and then a few minutes more to develop the gluten in the flour.

If using a mixer, beat on medium speed about 4 minutes. (KitchenAid stand mixer: use the flat beater on speed 4)

If mixing by hand, beat with a spoon or sturdy wire whip about 6 minutes.

Cover with plastic wrap or a cotton dish towel and let rise at room temperature until doubled in bulk, about 1-1/2 hours.



Closeup of Sponge
Doubled in Bulk

Final Bread

Add oil and honey to sponge and mix it in. When incorporated, add salt and soy flour and mix it in.

If using a regular mixer, switch to hand kneading when the motor starts to strain.

Add the remaining bread flour in increments, incorporating well after each addition. Keep a small portion of the bread flour in reserve for the final hand kneading.

If using a stand mixer, switch to the dough hook for this step. Knead dough on low speed (Kitchen Aid speed 2) for about 4 minutes. Don't be concerned if the dough does not completely ball on the hook.

Sprinkle your reserve flour on the board and finish kneading by hand. The final dough should be smooth and supple but remain slightly tacky. It may leave a small residue on the board even when fully kneaded. You should **not** need any additional flour beyond your reserve.



Kneaded Dough
on Board

Lightly oil the mixer bowl (you do not need to wash it first). Place the dough in the mixer bowl, rotate it in a full circle and then turn upside-down so there is a light film of oil on top. Cover bowl tightly with plastic wrap.

Let dough rise until doubled in bulk. You may either

1. let the dough rise overnight in the refrigerator
- OR
2. let it rise at room temperature (about 2 hours).

When the dough has doubled, grease your pans. Divide dough into portions. Press/pat each portion into a rough rectangle about the width of the loaf pan. Roll up like a jelly roll, pinching the dough together after each roll.



Shaping the Dough

Place, seam side down, in loaf pan, cover with plastic wrap and let rise until about doubled (about 1 hour - or about 1-1/2 hours if the dough is cold from an overnight refrigerator rise).



Ready to Bake

Preheat oven to 350°F.

OPTIONAL STEP: Right before placing in oven, slash the dough lengthwise at a depth of about 1/4 inch prior to placing in preheated oven.

Bake according to the following timetable. (NOTE: check bread about 10 minutes prior to the end of the baking period. If the crust is browning too rapidly for your taste, lay some tin foil, shiny side up, on the top of the loaves.)

amount	baking time
=====	=====
mini-loaf	~ 30 minutes
1 pound loaf	~ 40 to 45 minutes
1-1/2 pound loaf	~ 45 to 50 minutes



Discussion

What Keeps the Bread Fresh?

Both the honey and the soy flour contribute to the keeping qualities of this bread.

Honey contributes to freshness in two ways. Besides adding it's own moisture, honey (like many liquid sweeteners) is *hygroscopic*, which simply means that it tends to absorb and retain moisture. Honey is also a natural preservative.

In general, including some legume flour in your bread dough will help keep the bread fresh longer. Soy flour is especially beneficial in this respect (a small amount is often added to commercial baked products to extend shelf life). Do make sure you purchase *full fat* soy flour (*not* defatted soy flour); if in doubt, *read the package label*.

On Soy Flour

Soy flour is available in health food stores and some supermarkets. In my area, the major distributors are [Arrowhead Mills](#) and [Bob's Red Mill](#). The web sites of both distributors have an easy look-up page to find a store near you that carries their products. Here are the links for each of them: [find Arrowhead Mills Products in a Store Near You](#) and [Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods store finder](#)

Because of its high oil content, soy flour should be stored in the refrigerator or freezer after purchase.

Measuring by Weight vs Measuring by Volume

Measuring by weight is always preferable to measuring by volume. I always measure by weight but every effort has been made to give a reasonable approximation by volume.

Last Requests

All readers are earnestly and shamelessly solicited to contribute

- pearls of wisdom
- words of encouragement
- or any other comments you see fit

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