

Classic French Croissants Recipe

Croissant dough ingredients:

500g flour

55g white sugar

10g salt

165g milk

165g water

8g instant yeast

For lamination:

250g unsalted butter

For egg wash

1 whole egg

15ml (1 Tbsp) milk

Day 1

Mixing your dough

- Before mixing the dough, weigh out your milk and heat it up (pot or microwave) until you see some steam. There is no need to boil the milk. This de-activates a protein in the milk that can potentially mess up the croissant dough.
- Weigh out all of the ingredients into a mixing bowl (except the butter). The butter will be used later for the lamination process.
- Use a stand mixer and mix on low speed until the ingredients come together (1 – 2 minutes) and form a ball of dough. Then increase the speed to medium and mix for 3 – 4 minutes. The dough should be soft and slightly tacky. You could also mix the dough by hand and then knead for about 5 minutes.
- Remove dough from mixer and wrap up in plastic cling film. Place the dough in the fridge overnight.

Preparing your butter block

- This can be done the night before or a few hours before on the day of making your croissants. The butter should be at slightly cool/room temperature (not melting). It should be firm but pliable.
- Cut 1m of baking paper and then fold it in half. Then fold it up so that you have a rectangle of 40 cm x 20cm.
- Cut the butter into smaller pieces. Unfold the baking paper and place the butter evenly onto the baking paper. Fold it up again, and then roll out the butter until you get a 40cm x 20cm even sheet of butter.
- Place your butter block in the fridge overnight or for at least 1 hour before use.

Day 2

First Fold

- Remove your dough and your butter block from the fridge. Roll out the dough into a 40cm x 40cm rectangle of even thickness.
- Check your butter to make sure it is cold but not brittle. It should be pliable and a similar consistency to the dough. If it is too cold, leave it out to warm up slightly. If the butter is melting, leave it in the fridge to firm up.
- Unwrap the butter and center it vertically on top of the rolled-out dough. Slowly peel off the remaining baking paper. Scrape off any leftover bits of butter from the baking paper and place them onto the main butter block.
- Fold the sides of the dough towards the center of the butter block. Seal the dough. Make sure all of the butter has been encased by the dough. Press down lightly to seal the butter into the dough.
- Use your rolling pin and gently tap the dough from top to bottom. Then, roll out the dough vertically to a length of 60cm. If the dough is resisting the rolling process, let it rest for 5 – 10 minutes. Then continue rolling.
- Once the dough is 60cm in length, brush off any excess flour and then fold one third of the dough from the top towards the bottom. Then fold the bottom third over the top. You have now completed one single fold, which forms 3 layers of butter in the dough.
- Wrap up the dough and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Second Fold

- Remove the dough from the fridge and let it sit at room temperature for 10 – 15minutes. Feel the sides of the dough to make sure the butter is not hard and brittle. If it is, let it rest for another 10 minutes. If you roll the dough while the butter is still hard, the butter will break and mess up the layers. You want the dough to be soft, but still cold.
- Flour the dough on both sides and then tap the dough with your rolling pin. Make sure the overlapping edge of the dough is on your right. Then roll out the dough to a length of 60cm. Rest the dough if it shows resistance during rolling.
- Once the dough is 60cm in length, brush off any excess flour and then fold one third of the dough from the top towards the bottom. Then fold the bottom third over the top. You have now completed two single folds, which forms 9 (3x3) layers of butter in the dough.
- Wrap up the dough and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Third Fold

- Remove the dough from the fridge and let it sit at room temperature for 10 – 15minutes. Feel the sides of the dough to make sure the butter is not hard and brittle. If it is, let it rest for another 10 minutes.
- Flour the dough on both sides and then tap the dough with your rolling pin. Make sure the overlapping edge of the dough is on your right. Then roll out the dough to a length of 60cm. Rest the dough if it shows resistance during rolling.
- Once the dough is 60cm in length, brush off any excess flour and then fold one third of the dough from the top towards the bottom. Then fold the bottom third over the top. You have now completed three single folds, which forms 27 (3x3x3) layers of butter in the dough.
- Wrap up the dough and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Final Shaping

- Remove the dough from the fridge and let it sit at room temperature for 10 – 15minutes. Feel the sides of the dough to make sure the butter is not hard and brittle.
- Flour the dough on both sides and then tap the dough with your rolling pin. Make sure the overlapping edge of the dough is on your right. Then roll out the dough to a length of 60cm x 28cm.
- Loosen and flip the dough as necessary. Make sure the dough does not stick to the bench as it will rip the dough and mess up the layers. Rest the dough if it shows resistance during

rolling. You may need to rest the dough several times before achieving the final dimensions.

- Once the dough is rolled out correctly, use a ruler and knife to trim the edges of the dough so that you have a perfect rectangle.
- Mark the dough at 10cm intervals on the bottom edge of the dough (10cm, 20cm, 30cm, etc.). Measure 5cm from the top left of the dough and mark the dough at 10 cm intervals on the top of the dough (5cm, 15cm, 25cm, etc.)
- Cut the dough using a sharp knife from the bottom left corner to the first top 5cm mark. Then cut from the 5cm mark to the bottom 10cm mark. Keep cutting to form the long triangles of dough.
- You will end up with 11 croissant triangles and two smaller offcut triangles. Set aside the offcuts. If the triangles are warming up, place them on a tray and then refrigerate for 10 minutes before shaping them.
- Take each triangle and slightly stretch them out. Then, starting from the base of the triangle, roll the dough in a spiral from bottom to top. Place the rolled-up croissants onto a baking tray.

Proofing

- Before baking, we need to allow the shaped croissants to rise (proof) to about double in volume, to ensure we get a nice light airy croissant.
- Spray each croissant with a light mist of water to prevent the dough from drying out while proofing.
- Take the tray of shaped croissants and place the tray into a cold oven. Place a small cup/bowl of hot water into the oven and close the door. This will create a slightly warm and humid proofing chamber which will allow the croissants to rise nicely. This is particularly helpful on colder days. On warmer days, make sure the croissants are not rising in an area warmer than 27C. The butter in your croissants will melt and ruin the layers.
- Croissants should take 2.5 – 4 hours to double in volume (colder days may be longer). Check now and again. When you think they are ready, give the tray a shake. The croissants should wobble. This is a sign they are aerated and ready to bake.
- Make sure not to under-proof the croissants. This will result in the butter leaking out during baking and a dense texture.

Baking

- Remove croissants from the oven proofing chamber and pre-heat the oven to 200C. While the oven is heating up, brush each croissant gently with your egg wash. Once the oven is ready, place the tray into middle rack of the oven.
- Bake for 5 minutes at 200C and then lower to 180C for an additional 15 minutes. The total bake time varies between 15 – 20 minutes (more likely 20 minutes in a home oven). Bake until you get a nice gold crust (even if it takes more than 20 minutes).
- Remove from the oven and let the croissants cool down. Enjoy!