

Challah

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Adapted from Paul Hollywood's "How to Bake"

- 500 g bread flour (preferably King Arthur brand)
- 10 g salt

- 25 g granulated sugar
- 10 g instant SAF yeast
- 30 g unsalted butter (softened)
- 2 large eggs (beaten)
- 1 large egg (for glazing)
- 50 ml whole milk (warm)
- 180 ml water (cool)

1. Put the flour into a large mixing bowl and add the salt and sugar to one side of the bowl and the yeast to the other. Add the butter, the two beaten eggs and the milk. Add half the water. Mix with your hands. Continue to add the water, a little bit at a time until the dough releases from the sides of the bowl. You may not need all of the water. The dough should be soft but not soggy.
2. Knead the dough on a lightly floured surface for about 5-10 minutes or until the surface of the dough is smooth and soft.
3. Put the dough into a lightly oiled bowl or container and cover lightly with a tea towel. Leave to rise until doubled in size – at least one hour.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment or silicone mat.
5. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and punch it down (this does not mean you actually punch it but fold in inwards repeatedly to release all the gases that have formed during fermentation). Divide it into 3 equal pieces (you should use a scale and each piece will weigh roughly 280g depending on how much water you used). Roll each piece to about 10 inches. This is where I strayed from Paul's instructions. His instructions state to roll out to about 9 inches but this produces a short fat loaf whereas the loaf should really end up about 16 inches long so you want to begin with longer

strands.

6. Join the three strands together at the top by basically squeezing them together. Then braid like you would hair:

Strand 3 over 2, 1 over 2, 3 over 2, 1 over 2 and so on. See video.

Tuck the ends underneath and transfer to baking sheet.

7. Brush with remaining beaten egg. Put the tray inside a clean plastic bag (I use extra large storage bags with 2 mugs alongside the loaf to keep the bag from sticking to the dough). Preheat oven to to 400°F. Prove for one hour or until doubled in size.
8. Bake for 20-25 minutes or deep golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.
9. Save leftovers for French toast!

How to Plait a challah loaf