

Perfect pizza dough

A quick dough mixture using dried yeast—the quantities given here make 4 thin-crust Italian-style pizzas.



Step 1: sift 1lb 2oz (500g) of "00" or all-purpose flour into a bowl, and add a pinch of salt, and a package of dried yeast. Make a well in the center of the flour, then slowly add 12fl oz (360ml) of warm water. Mix with a wooden spoon, or the dough beaters of a food mixer, until it comes together, then add 2fl oz (60ml) of olive oil, and continue to mix until it forms a soft dough.



Step 2: place the dough on a floured surface, and knead firmly, using the heel of your hand, folding the dough over as you go. Do this for about 10 minutes, until it becomes soft and spongy.



Step 3: put the dough in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap or a dish towel, and leave in a warm place (you can preheat the oven and leave the bowl on top of the stove above) for 30–40 minutes, or until it has doubled in size.



Step 4: Turn the dough out onto the floured surface again, and knead with your knuckles for a couple of minutes to knock out the air (known as "knocking back"). Divide the dough into fourths and roll each piece out as thinly as you can, rolling away from you, and turning it as you go. You may have to pull and stretch the dough a little as it tends to spring back. You need it to be about 10in (25cm) in diameter, although it doesn't have to be perfectly round. Transfer to a hot, lightly oiled baking tray, and top with your favorite toppings (see previous page for some ideas).

KNEADING DOUGH



STEP 1: Using as little flour as possible, press the lump of dough down with your hands.



Step 2: Repeatedly fold and press until the dough becomes far less sticky and quite elastic.

