

BAKING SCHOOL

On-Demand

BAGUETTE BAKING 101

ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES TO BAKE YOUR BEST

Our Baking School

We love to bake and want to share our passion with you. Whether you're a beginner or a bakery professional, let us help you take your baking to the next level. Explore our hands-on classes. Relax and take in a seated demonstration. Bake with kids. Enjoy our special guest instructors. Whatever you wish, you're invited to come bake with us.

The King Arthur Baking School has multiple locations:
Norwich, VT | Skagit Valley, WA | Live Online | On-Demand

Baking for a better world.

Our mission is to share the pure joy of baking nationwide. But that's not all; our 235-year-old employee-owned Vermont company is a certified B Corporation, dedicated to environmental stewardship and helping those in need — because after all, baked goods and doing good go hand in hand.

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Baking School On-Demand

BAGUETTE BAKING 101:
ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES TO BAKE YOUR BEST

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TOOLS CHECKLIST

FOR MIXING AND DIVIDING:

- ☐ SCALE
- ☐ MIXING BOWLS
- ☐ FLEXIBLE SPATULA
- ☐ FLEXIBLE BOWL SCRAPER
- ☐ MEASURING SPOONS
- ☐ MEASURING CUP
- ☐ LARGE BOWL
- ☐ BOWL COVERS

FOR PROOFING AND SHAPING:

- ☐ BENCH KNIFE
- ☐ FINE-MESH SIEVE
- ☐ BAKER'S COUCHE
- ☐ BOWL COVERS
- ☐ RIMMED BAKING SHEETS
- ☐ BAKING SHEET COVERS

FOR BAKING AND FINISHING:

- ☐ LAME
- ☐ TRANSFER PEEL
- ☐ PASTRY BRUSHES
- ☐ DIGITAL THERMOMETERS
- ☐ INFRARED THERMOMETER
- ☐ BAKING STONE OR STEEL

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Flöttcar
PLATINUM

Poolish Baguettes

YIELD: THREE 18" BAGUETTES

These baguettes boast a crisp crust and an airy, chewy interior. An overnight poolish adds deep flavor to the easy-to-handle dough, while gentle bowl folds build strength without kneading. Shaping a classic baguette requires practice, but even imperfect loaves are delicious — perfect with butter or as a base for your favorite sandwich fillings.

INGREDIENTS

Poolish

138g (1 cup plus 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
138g (½ cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons) water, cool
⅛ teaspoon (pinch) instant yeast

Dough

all of the poolish (above)
324g (2⅔ cups plus 1 teaspoon) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
189g (¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon) water, lukewarm
1.5g (½ teaspoon) instant yeast
10g (rounded 1½ teaspoons) salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **To make the poolish:** The night before you're ready to bake, combine the flour, water, and yeast in a medium bowl or 1-quart container and mix until well combined. Cover tightly and let the poolish ferment at room temperature (68°F to 72°F) for about 15 hours. When it's ready ("ripe"), the poolish should be very bubbly and fragrant.
2. **To make the dough:** When the poolish is ripe, combine it with the remaining dough ingredients in a large bowl. Stir until the mixture forms a cohesive mass. The dough should be somewhat sticky, so if the dough feels dry, add additional water 1 teaspoon at a time. Cover the dough and set it aside for 10 minutes. *(Note: The dough will now rest for 30 minutes. In that period, you'll perform a bowl fold every 10 minutes in order to develop the dough's strength.)*
3. **Perform the first bowl fold:** After the first 10 minutes, use a wet hand to grab a section of dough from one side of the bowl, then lift it up until it feels tight or begins to tear away from the rest of the dough, then press it into the center. Repeat this motion, grabbing a new section of dough each time, until you've made a full circle around the bowl. The dough will become tighter and more elastic as you work; this tightening is a sign that you've successfully completed one fold. Cover the bowl and let it rest for another 10 minutes.
4. Repeat the bowl fold for a second time. (Remember to use a wet hand to prevent the dough from sticking.) At this point, the dough should feel smoother and tighter. Cover the bowl and let it rest for another 10 minutes.
5. Repeat the bowl fold for a third time.
6. After the third bowl fold, cover the bowl and let the dough rest for 1 to 1½ hours, until the dough is airy, voluminous, and looks relaxed; you may even see some bubbles on its surface. Check the dough halfway through this rise and give it a stretch: If the dough stretches easily, perform a fourth bowl fold; if it feels like you could pick up the dough in one mass, skip the fourth fold.
7. **While the dough rests, prepare the oven for baking:** Arrange racks in the center and bottom third of the oven and preheat the oven to 500°F with a baking stone or steel on the center rack and an empty cast iron skillet on the lower rack. If possible, adjust the stone and pan so that the skillet isn't directly under the stone, making it easier for steam to reach the baking bread.
8. **To preshape the baguettes:** Once the dough has risen, transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface. Divide the dough into thirds (about 265g each). Gently preshape into rounds by pulling the edges into the center. Leave the dough balls seam-side up, then cover and let rest for 20 minutes.
9. **To shape the baguettes:** Working with one piece at a time, flatten the dough slightly to form a rectangle, then fold the top third of the dough down over the rectangle and press firmly with the heel of your hand to seal. Turn the dough around 180° and repeat: fold, then flatten. Repeat this whole process again so that you've folded it a total of four times; the dough should have started to elongate into a tighter cylindrical shape. With the seam-side down, cup your fingers and gently roll the dough into a 18" log. Taper the ends of the logs slightly to create the baguette's typical "pointy" ends.
10. Place the shaped baguettes, seam-side up on a couche or a lightly floured kitchen towel. Repeat with the remaining dough.
11. Let the shaped baguettes proof, covered, until they are visibly puffy but not fragile and spring back when gently pressed, about 30 to 40 minutes.
12. Use a transfer peel to gently invert and slide the risen loaves onto a piece of parchment (they will now be seam-side down), then transfer the loaves and parchment onto a peel, inverted baking sheet, or rimless cookie sheet. Using a lame, make three or five long lengthwise cuts, starting and ending at the tip of the baguettes. Use the peel to slide the baguettes and parchment onto the preheated stone.
13. Pour about 1 cup of hot water into the skillet. Steam will billow from the pan upward to envelop the bread; be sure to wear good oven mitts to shield your hands and arms. Quickly close the oven door to trap the steam. Bake until the crust is well-caramelized, and the sides are very firm, 16 to 20 minutes.
14. Remove from the oven and let cool completely on a wire rack before slicing. Baguettes are best enjoyed the day they're baked.

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