

Paul Hollywood's White Cob



Ingredients

500g strong white bread flour, plus extra for dusting

10g salt

10g instant yeast

30g unsalted butter, softened

320ml cool water

Olive oil for kneading

White Cob

Makes 1 loaf
Prep 3 hours
Bake 30 minutes

If you are a novice baker you can use this recipe to make a basic loaf in a tin, although the quantities here provide more dough than you would need to make a tin loaf.

1. Tip the flour into a large mixing bowl and then add the salt and yeast, making sure they are placed on opposite sides of the bowl. Add the butter and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the water, turning the mixture around using your fingers. Slowly add more water until all the flour has been incorporated. When the dough is soft and not soggy it is ready. Move the mixture around the bowl to clean the sides until the mixture forms a rough dough.
2. Cover your work surface with a little oil and then begin to knead the dough. Knead for 5 – 10 minutes, working through the wet stage until the dough starts to form a soft, smooth skin and feels silky. Put the dough into a large, lightly oiled bowl and cover with a tea towel. When it has risen to at least double in size and the dough is bouncy and shiny it is ready. This should take at least 1 hour, but can be left for 2 or even 3 hours.
3. Line a baking tray with baking parchment or silicone paper.
4. Place the dough on a lightly floured surface and shape into a ball by knocking it inwards several times until all the air is knocked out and the dough is smooth. Then flatten the dough into a rough rectangle and then roll it into an oblong. Turn the dough so that the longer edge is running away from you and flatten it slightly. Now roll the two ends in towards the centre, so you end up with a chunky squarish shape. Turn the dough over so that the join is underneath.
5. Next, using both hands you need to shape the dough into a smooth domed cob. With your palms turned upwards, position your hands on each side and slightly under the dough. Using your hands tuck the dough neatly underneath itself. Continue, softly forcing the sides of the dough down and underneath, creating a smooth, taut top and a rough underside. Try not to add too much extra flour during shaping.
6. The dough is now ready for proving. Place it on your baking tray and place this in a clean plastic bag. Leave to prove for about 1 hour, until it has at least doubled in size and the dough springs back if you prod it gently with your finger. Whilst the dough is proving turn your oven to 230°C and put a roasting tray in the bottom to heat up.
7. Once ready dust your dough with some flour and then slash deeply with a knife. Add hot water to the hot roasting tray, this will create steam in your oven giving your bread a lighter crust. Put your bread into the oven and bake for 30 minutes or until it is cooked and sounds hollow when tapped on the bottom. Leave your cob to cool on a wire rack.

Recipe from: <http://paulhollywood.com/recipes/white-cob/>