

# Chicago Thin-Crust (Tavern-Style) Pizza Dough

By J. Kenji López-Alt

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**Total Time** 30 minutes, plus at least  
3 hours' and up to 5  
days' resting

**Prep Time** 5 minutes

**Cook Time** 3 days 25 minutes

**Rating** ★★★★★ (504)

Compared with many other styles of pizza dough, this one is relatively easy. It's stretched with a rolling pin, then allowed to sit uncovered overnight until it has lightly dried to the texture of a flour tortilla. This is the secret to getting the crunchiest, most cracker-crisp crust, and it also makes topping and moving the pizzas a snap. Give this recipe a try. If you do, there are a few things to note: Both mass measurements in grams and volume measurements in cups and spoons are provided. It's strongly advised to use the mass measurements for everything, but at the very least, use it for the flour. Because flour is compressible, a cup can vary in weight by as much as 50 percent, completely throwing off the hydration level of your dough. Also strongly recommended: Following the full three- to five-day cold fermentation in Step 3, which makes rolling easier and results in a lighter crust.

*This recipe is part of our complete recipe for a [Chicago thin-crust pizza](#). View the recipe for the [finished pizza](#), as well as recipes for the [accompanying sauce](#) and [Chicago-style Italian sausage](#).*

## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** 2 (14-inch) crusts

300 grams bread flour (about 2¼ cups, see Tips)

7 grams sugar (about 1½ teaspoons)

7 grams salt (about 1¼ teaspoons table salt or 1¾ teaspoons kosher salt)

1 gram instant yeast (about ¼ teaspoon)

150 grams cold water (150 milliliters, about ⅔ cup)

30 grams neutral oil, such as light olive oil, vegetable oil or corn oil

Semolina or cornmeal, for dusting

## PREPARATION

### Step 1

**Make the dough:** Combine the flour, sugar, salt and yeast in the bowl of a stand mixer (see Tips). Whisk together to combine, then add the water and oil. Mix at low speed with the dough hook attachment, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula, until the dough comes together in a shaggy ball. Cover the bowl and let the dough rest for 10 minutes. Mix on medium-low speed until the dough is silky and pulls away from the sides of the bowl, about 5 minutes. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface.

### Step 2

**Divide the dough:** Using a bench scraper or knife, cut the dough into two even pieces, about 250 grams each. Using lightly floured hands, shape each piece into a smooth ball, then lightly coat each with oil, using your hands to cover every surface. Transfer each ball to a quart-size zipper-lock bag or other sealable container at least three times its volume. (Quart-size plastic deli containers also work for this.)

### Step 3

**Ferment the dough:** For good results, let the dough rest at room temperature until doubled in volume, about 3 hours. For better results, refrigerate the dough overnight. For best results, refrigerate the dough for at least 3 and up to 5 days.

### Step 4

**The day before baking, roll the dough:** Transfer one dough ball to a work surface generously dusted with semolina or cornmeal. (Refrigerated dough can be rolled straight out of the fridge, though allowing it to rest covered for 1 hour at room temperature will make rolling easier.) Using a rolling pin, roll the dough into a very thin circle 14 inches in diameter, lifting and rotating it occasionally (use a ruler or measuring tape to ensure the right size). Repeat with the second ball. If the dough feels like it keeps bouncing back as you try and stretch it, cover it with an inverted bowl or a clean kitchen towel, let it rest for half an hour, then try rolling again.

### Step 5

**Cure the dough:** Transfer the doughs to a flat surface lined with parchment paper or butcher paper. Allow to rest uncovered at room temperature overnight. The top surface of the dough should end up dry to the touch with a leathery feel. If they puff at all during curing, you can push any bubbles with a fork and push them down to flatten them.

### TIPS

*For this recipe, you'll want an accurate baking scale and enough room to leave your stretched dough out at room temperature for a night. Using a scale to measure your ingredients is strongly advised here — at the very least for the flour. Going without can throw off the hydration level of your dough, and by extension, the success of your dough.*

*If you want to make 2 (12-inch) pizzas instead, use 225 grams flour, 5 grams sugar, 5 grams salt, 1 gram yeast, 115 grams cold water and 22.5 grams oil. Use only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the toppings.*

*The dough can also be made in a food processor or by hand. To make with a food processor, combine all the ingredients and process until the dough forms a ball that rides around the blades. Continue running the food processor for 30 seconds, then transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and continue as directed in Step 2.*

*To make by hand, combine the dry ingredients in a bowl, add the oil and water, and stir with a wooden spoon until a stiff, shaggy dough is formed. Cover the bowl and let the dough rest for 10 minutes. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth, 7 to 10 minutes. Proceed as directed in Step 2.*

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### Private Notes

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