

# Overnight French Bread

*adapted from a recipe by baker John McLure – easily doubled for two big loaves*

## Ingredients

1 cup plus 1Tbs warm water (100 - 120 degrees F)  
3/4 tsp yeast  
1 pound unbleached white flour (around 3 cups)  
1 3/4 tsp salt  
cornmeal (optional)  
poppy seeds, sesame seeds, coarse salt (optional)

## Equipment

2-quart or larger bowl  
liquid and dry measuring cup  
measuring spoon  
wooden spoon  
thermometer (optional)  
plastic wrap or bag, rubberband to fasten down (optional)  
cornmeal (optional)  
baking sheet  
parchment paper or butter/oil to grease sheet  
spray bottle for water (optional), or small bowl of water

## Step One – Dough (10 minutes or less)

Pour the water in a bowl, add the yeast, and stir gently to dissolve. Add the flour and salt and mix, then scrape into a big shaggy ball. Knead for about 5 minutes. Add *small* amounts of flour if too wet, *small* amount of water if too dry.

## Step Two -- First Rising (around 12 hours)

Cover with plastic wrap or large plastic bag (anchored by rubber band) and let sit overnight or for twelve hours.

## Step Three – Shaping (10 minutes or less)

On a floured surface, scrape out the dough and knead for a minute. Shape into two or more loaves, and place on baking sheet parchment paper-covered or greased baking sheet, sprinkled with cornmeal, if desired.

## Step Four -- Second Rising (about 3 hours)

Cover pan with bag or wrap or wet dishcloth and let sit for at least three hours. Note: most materials touching the surface will stick to the bread, so try to tent it or carefully lift off covering.

## Step Five – Baking (about 20 minutes)

Preheat oven to 425F (375F convection oven)  
Slash tops of bread diagonally with sharp knife, spritz or sprinkle with water, sprinkle with seeds if desired, and place in oven. Immediately spritz or sprinkle oven interior and bread with water. Bake for about 20 minutes, until nice and golden brown. Cool on rack.