

How to Bake High-altitude Yeast Bread

According to [Colorado State University Extension](#), decreased atmospheric pressure at higher elevations makes dough rise much faster, so adjustments to high-altitude bread need to account for this, both in terms of timing and flavor of the bread.

Decrease the amount of yeast in the recipe by 25% to slow proofing times. Make sure your bowl has plenty of room for the dough to rise in. Since rising times are much shorter at higher altitudes, you have a number of options to help its flavor, outlined below.

Make water and flour adjustments as necessary to get a dough with the correct texture. Because conditions are much drier at high altitude, you may need to increase the amount of liquid to ensure your bread dough is not too dry.

Use slightly colder water and an overall lower [Desired Dough Temperature \(DDT\)](#) to slow the rate of fermentation and overall rise time of the dough.

Give the dough one extra rise by punching it down twice before forming it.

Try covering the dough and **placing it in the refrigerator for its first rise**, to slow the action of the yeast and give the dough more time to develop flavor, which can be lost during quicker rising times.

If you have sourdough starter on hand, use it to replace a portion of the liquid in non-sourdough yeasted recipes in the recipe (25% is a good place to start) to help add flavor that is otherwise lost during quicker fermentation times. If you don't have any sourdough starter, make a quick sponge by mixing the yeast, liquid, and 1 to 2 cups of the flour called for in the recipe. Cover and let the sponge work for a few hours in the refrigerator to develop it before proceeding.

Consider using high-protein bread flour, which can provide additional strength and structure to bread and pizza dough.

What to change at high altitude

Oven temperature

Increase 15°F to 25°F; use the lower increase when making chocolate or delicate cakes.

Since leavening and evaporation proceed more quickly, the idea is to use a higher temperature to set the structure of baked goods before they over-expand and dry out.

Baking time

Decrease by 5 to 8 minutes per 30 minutes of baking time.

Baking at higher temperatures means products are done sooner.

Liquid

Increase by 1 to 2 tablespoons at 3,000 feet. Increase by 1 1/2 teaspoons for each additional 1,000 feet. You can also use extra eggs as part of this liquid, depending on the recipe.

Extra liquid keeps products from drying out at higher temperatures and evaporation rates.

Flour

At 3,500 feet, add 1 more tablespoon per recipe. For each additional 1,500 feet, add one more tablespoon.

In some recipes, a flour with a higher protein content may yield better results. Additional flour helps to strengthen the structure of baked goods.

Leaveners

Decrease baking soda and/or baking powder according to our leaveners chart below

Baked goods rise more quickly at higher altitudes, so less leavener is needed

Traditional Italian Bread Makers video - 10 min

<https://vimeo.com/834908782?fl=ip&fe=ec>