



Thawing, Proofing and Preparing Frozen Pizza Dough

Overnight:

Thaw dough in the refrigerator overnight or for about 12 hours in the plastic bag it is packaged in. Take it out of the refrigerator, remove from the bag, form into a ball, and place in a lightly oiled large bowl. Bring dough to room temperature, which will take about thirty minutes and then proof for an hour or so until doubled in volume. Punch down the dough by placing your fist in the center of the dough. Fold the dough back onto itself four or five times.

Over several hours:

Remove the dough from the plastic bag and place in a lightly oiled large bowl. Rub the top of the dough lightly with oil or spray with cooking oil spray. Cover the bowl with waxed paper and a clean cloth or tea towel. Place the bowl in a warm but not hot location such as an oven with the oven light on or on top of a radiator. Let the dough thaw and rise for 2 to 4 hours until doubled in volume. Punch down the dough by placing your fist in the center of the dough. Fold the dough back onto itself four or five times.

To quicken thawing time:

Fill a large bowl with cold water and place the bag of dough in the bowl keeping the top of the dough above water. As an option, use a smaller bowl inside the larger bowl to help hold the bagged dough upright. Once the ball of dough thaws remove it from the bag, form into a ball and place in a lightly oiled large bowl. Allow it to rise until doubled in volume. Punch down the dough by placing your fist in the center of the dough. Fold the dough back onto itself four or five times.

Once thawed, proofed and punched down:

Stretch or roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to desired size or cut into portions and make individual smaller pizzas, or calzones, stromboli, or in any recipe calling for pizza dough.

Cooking tips:

Cooking pizza at a high temperature on a pizza stone is ideal; a pizza round or sheet pan will also work just fine.

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees and place the pizza stone on the lowest rack.

Sprinkle cornmeal on a pizza peel or inverted sheet pan. Place the rolled out dough on top, and cover with toppings, as desired. Slide rounds onto the pizza stone, and bake until crust is crisp and golden and toppings are bubbling, 5 to 7 minutes.