

# Slow Cooker Bread Recipe

Full Recipe: This is a basic recipe for baking rustic jalapeno or pickle bread in a slow cooker, with herb, apple, and garlic variations, and extra details and tips.

Written by Reba at Crafty Reason

<http://craftyreason.com>

## Basic Ingredients for all versions:

- 3 ½ cups bread flour
- 2 ¼ tsp (or 1 packet) dry active yeast\*
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp sea salt
- cooking spray

Notes: The basic ingredients should be measured and followed as closely as you can, except for the sea salt--I just estimate that in my palm, as it's a garnish for the top of the bread.

\*You may use either regular or fast-rising yeast. The only difference I have noticed is that the fast-rising yeast seems to "bubble up" very quickly in the liquid, whereas the regular yeast needs a few minutes to start creating bubbles. I have read online that fast-rising yeast doesn't require the sugar activator, but I haven't tried this recipe without sugar, as I actually quite enjoy watching the yeast "attack" the sugar in the liquid!

## For jalapeno bread:

- handful of chopped jalapenos
  - I vary the size of my handful depending on the taste preferences of who will be eating the bread. For Crafty Jason, I have sometimes used a whole cup of chopped jalapenos. For a party I tend to use about half a cup.
  - I try to chop the jalapenos as small as I can.
- roughly 1 tbsp Italian herbs of your choice, dried or fresh
  - Recently I have been using [McCormick's Perfect Pinch Italian Seasoning](#), which contains marjoram, thyme, rosemary, savory, sage, oregano, and basil.

- I have also tried this recipe with oregano (dried and fresh), sage (dried and fresh), rosemary (dried and fresh), and mixes of rosemary, oregano, thyme, and sage (dried and fresh). It just depended on what herbs I had on hand at the time. All of the flavors have worked well together with everything I've tried so far. I prefer the flavor and consistency with the dry herbs as opposed to fresh, and also it's a lot less work than chopping the fresh herbs.
- about 1/2 cup shredded cheese (optional)
  - I used [a store-banded Mexican cheese blend](#) (Monterey Jack, queso, cheddar, quesadilla, and Asadero cheeses) because I had it on hand. You could try any cheese.
  - I have read that it can create a different effect if you chop your cheese into small squares instead of using shredded--that way you'll end up with small melted cheese pockets in your bread. I haven't tried this yet, though.
  - I have used between 1/4 and 1/2 cup depending on what I have in the fridge. This just provides a bit more flavor to the bread--with shredded cheese, you won't actually have any cheese pieces in the bread after baking.
- 1-1/4 cups of water + jalapeno juice\*
  - I vary the ratio of jalapeno juice to water depending on who will be eating the bread, and how much I want it to rise. The more jalapeno juice you use, the spicier it will be, but it tends to rise more with a greater percentage of water.\*\*
  - For Crafty Jason, I use 1/2 cup jalapeno juice and 3/4 cup water.
  - For a party, I use about 1/4 cup jalapeno juice and 1 cup water.

Notes: \*The total liquid (juice + water) must equal exactly 1-1/4 cup.

\*\*Your liquid mixture should be warm. I microwave mine for 45 seconds before adding the liquid, yeast, and sugar. In the winter if my metal mixing bowl is cold, I will also run the bottom under hot water in the sink while the liquid is in the microwave. Be careful--if your liquid is too hot or too cold, your yeast won't rise--too hot and it will die, too cold and it won't "wake up."

## For pickle bread:

- handful of chopped pickles
  - I use 2-3 large sliced dill pickles--I prefer the style with as little skin as possible because of the texture in the cooked bread.
  - I leave the chunks of pickle fairly large--1/4" to 1/2"--because I like the little pieces of pickle in the bread.
- roughly 1 tbsp dill weed
  - I have also tried this recipe with rosemary (dried and fresh), sage (dried and fresh), rosemary (dried and fresh), and mixes of rosemary, thyme, and sage (dried and fresh). It just depended on what herbs I had on hand at the time. All of the flavors have worked well together with everything I've tried so far. I prefer the

flavor and consistency with the dry herbs as opposed to fresh, and also it's a lot less work than chopping the fresh herbs.

- I have also tried this using fresh dill in oil--I substitute 1 tbsp of olive oil with the fresh dill, because it's a very oily, wet mixture.
- 1-1/4 cups of water + pickle juice\*
  - I vary the ratio of pickle juice to water depending on how much I want it to rise. The more pickle juice you use, the stronger the pickle flavor will be, but it tends to rise more with a greater percentage of water.\*\*
  - I normally use about 1/2 cup pickle juice and 3/4 cup water. This often doesn't rise all the way to the top of the slow cooker, yielding a denser bread.

Notes: \*The total liquid (juice + water) must equal exactly 1-1/4 cup.

\*\*Your liquid mixture should be warm. I microwave mine for 45 seconds before adding the liquid, yeast, and sugar. In the winter if my metal mixing bowl is cold, I will also run the bottom under hot water in the sink while the liquid is in the microwave. Be careful--if your liquid is too hot or too cold, your yeast won't rise--too hot and it will die, too cold and it won't wake up.

### Other Variations:

-To make herb bread (original recipe): instead of adding jalapeno or pickle, use only herbs. When I made fresh herb bread, I used 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped, 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped, and 1/2 tbsp fresh sage, chopped.

-To make garlic bread, use 1 1/4 cup water as your liquid (no juice), and instead of jalapeno or pickle, to the herb bread recipe, add 3 heaping tbsp chopped garlic and use fewer of the other herbs (I tried this with fresh sage, basil, and oregano). Squeeze out as much extra liquid as possible from the garlic.

-To make apple herb bread, use 1 1/4 cup water as your liquid (no juice), and instead of jalapeno or pickle, chop one apple and add to original herb bread recipe. I used 1 tbsp dry rosemary and 1 tbsp dry thyme with it. I've used a granny smith apple and a honeycrisp apple, and both came out good. The apple flavor was quite mild, but the loaf was moist.

### Directions:

In the bowl of an electric mixer (or a large bowl), mix room-temperature water/juice mixture, yeast, and sugar. Let sit until mixture becomes bubbly, about 5 minutes. If liquid is cold, microwave for 45 seconds before adding yeast, and/or run mixing bowl under hot water for 45 seconds.

Once yeast has become bubbly, add flour, olive oil, herbs, and whichever vegetables or fruits you're using (jalapenos, pickles, garlic, apples, etc.). Using a dough hook in electric mixer, mix on medium speed for 5-6 minutes, or until dough is smooth and elastic. (If you don't have an electric mixer, knead dough by hand.)

Spray the insert of your slow cooker with cooking spray oil. Shape dough into a loaf and place in slow cooker. Sprinkle the top with sea salt.

Drape a thin kitchen towel, cheese cloth, or paper towel over the top of the slow cooker before putting the lid on. This will absorb any moisture to keep it from dripping on the bread.

Optional: Let rise for 1 hour 30 minutes. During this time, I usually turn the slow cooker on low for about 15 minutes; then I turn it off and let the bread rise for another hour and 15 minutes. If you would rather have a smaller, more dense loaf of bread, or if you don't have time, skip this rising step.

Cook on High for 1 hour 30 minutes, then on Low for 15 minutes, until bottom of bread is browned and completely cooked. Remove from crockpot and let cool before slicing--the moisture may collect at the bottom, so you can place the loaf on its side or on a pizza pan with holes to help keep the bottom from getting soggy.



Enjoy!

*~Crafty Reba*

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