



Kitchen Cheat Sheet: Old Fashioned Raisin Bread

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Tips and Time Savers

🍴 **Use warm, not hot, milk.**

After scalding, let it cool so it feels warm to the touch. Too hot and you'll harm the yeast before it even gets started.

🍴 **Aim for soft, slightly tacky dough.**

If the dough feels like Play-Doh, it's too dry. If it sticks like glue, it needs a touch more flour. You want smooth, elastic, and cooperative.

🍴 **Give the dough time to rise fully.**

Rushing the rise is the fastest way to end up with dense bread. Look for doubled size, not a specific number of minutes.

🍴 **Knead until the dough feels elastic**

Whether by hand or as a stand mixer bread recipe, proper kneading builds structure so your loaf slices instead of crumbles.

🍴 **Freeze slices, not the whole loaf.**

This freezer friendly bread is easiest to use when sliced first. Pull out one piece at a time for toast and you'll feel like a domestic genius later.

Storage

🍴 **At room temperature:**

Wrap the cooled loaf tightly in plastic wrap or store in an airtight container. It'll stay soft for about two days on the counter.

🍴 **For longer storage:**

Slice the bread, wrap it well, and freeze it. This freezer friendly loaf thaws quickly and toasts beautifully straight from frozen.

🍴 **Avoid the refrigerator:**

It dries bread out faster than leaving it on the counter. If you need it to last more than a couple of days, the freezer is the better choice.

🍴 **To refresh slices:**

Warm them briefly in the toaster or microwave to bring back that soft texture and make the raisins smell amazing again.

how to freeze raisin bread dough

🍴 Freeze after the first rise.

Let the dough rise once, then punch it down and shape it into a loaf. This keeps the yeast active but stable for freezing.

🍴 Wrap it well.

Place the shaped dough in a greased loaf pan, cover tightly with plastic wrap, then wrap again with foil to prevent freezer burn.

🍴 Freeze up to one month.

Bread dough freezes best within a few weeks. After that, the yeast weakens and the loaf may not rise as well.

🍴 Thaw in the refrigerator overnight.

Move the dough to the fridge and let it thaw slowly. The next day, let it sit at room temperature until it looks puffy and ready to bake.

🍴 Bake as directed.

Once the dough has fully thawed and completed its second rise, bake it just like fresh dough. You may need to add a few extra minutes to the bake time.

Variations

🍴 Cinnamon raisin bread:

Add a teaspoon of cinnamon to the dough or swirl cinnamon sugar through before shaping for that bakery-style ribbon of spice.

🍴 Orange raisin bread:

Stir in a little orange zest with the wet ingredients for a brighter flavor that pairs beautifully with the sweetness of the raisins.

🍴 Honey raisin bread:

Replace part of the sugar with honey for a deeper, more rounded sweetness and a slightly softer crumb.

🍴 Mixed fruit bread:

Swap some of the raisins for dried cranberries, chopped dates, or golden raisins for extra texture and color.

🍴 Nutty raisin bread:

Add a handful of chopped pecans or walnuts for crunch and a richer, old fashioned bakery feel.

FAQs

Why do you scald milk for bread?

Scalding milk helps weaken enzymes in the milk that can interfere with gluten development. In plain English, it helps your loaf rise better and gives you that soft, tender crumb people expect from an old fashioned bread recipe. Let the milk cool to warm, not hot, before adding it to the dough so you don't accidentally harm the yeast.

Can I make this raisin bread in a stand mixer?

Yes, and it's honestly the easiest way. This works beautifully as a stand mixer bread recipe because the dough hook kneads the dough consistently without overworking it. You're looking for a smooth, elastic dough that pulls away from the sides of the bowl.

Is this a good bread recipe for beginners?

Absolutely. This is designed as a beginner bread baking recipe with clear visual cues in the video so you can see what the dough should look like at each stage. If you can stir, wait, and let yeast do its thing, you can make this loaf.

Can I freeze raisin bread?

Yes, and you should if you won't eat it within a couple of days. Slice the loaf first, wrap it tightly, and freeze. This is a very freezer friendly bread, so you can pull out individual slices for toast whenever you want.

How do I store homemade raisin bread?

Keep it wrapped at room temperature for up to two days. After that, freezing is your best option. Homemade bread doesn't contain preservatives, so it dries out faster than store bread, but that's also why it tastes better.

Can I reduce the sugar or raisins?

You can adjust the raisins easily. Reducing the sugar slightly is fine, but don't remove it completely since it helps with browning, texture, and flavor balance.