

# Yeast – It Rises To the Occasion

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Yeast is a living organism rich in B-vitamins. The yeast used in bread making feeds on carbohydrates (flour, sugar, molasses, honey) and then starts to ferment making carbon dioxide and alcohol. The fermentation process produces leavening for the bread. Bubbles of carbon dioxide are trapped in the dough causing the dough to stretch and “rise.” In addition to leavening, the fermentation process produces an appealing flavor which becomes more pronounced the longer the yeast ferments.

## Types of Yeast for Baking

**Active Dry Yeast.** Active dry yeast is used by dissolving in water prior to mixing. Warm water 110-115 degrees F. is best. Active dry yeast may also be mixed in with dry ingredients. If this method is used the water temperature should be increased to 130 degrees F.

**Rapid Rise Yeast/Instant Yeast/Bread Machine Yeast.** Instant types of yeast are fast-acting. There is no need to dissolve instant yeast in water first, just mix in with dry ingredients. When baking with instant yeast use a one-rise method, which decreases rising time by 50%. After opening, instant yeast should be kept in the refrigerator or freezer to retain activity. When using in a bread machine decrease amount of instant yeast slightly. For traditional baking methods use about 2-1/4 tsp. yeast per 4 cups of flour, for bread machine methods use 1/2 tsp. yeast per cup of flour.

**Fresh Active Yeast/Compressed Yeast/Cake Yeast.** Cake yeast is crumbled into dry ingredients or softened in lukewarm (80 degree F.) water. Cake yeast is highly perishable, needs constant refrigeration, and has a short shelf life of about 8 weeks. This type of yeast is only available in limited markets.

## Substitutions/equivalents.

- 1 pkg. (0.25 oz) active dry yeast = 2 1/4 teaspoons
- 1 pkg. active yeast = 2 1/4 tsp. instant yeast (if using a bread machine reduce instant yeast to 1 1/2 tsp.)
- 1 pkg. active yeast = 2/3 ounce (0.6 oz) cake yeast.

For more information on yeast and bread making visit these websites:

[www.breadworld.com](http://www.breadworld.com)

[www.homebaking.org](http://www.homebaking.org)

[www.redstaryeast.com](http://www.redstaryeast.com)

(Sources: *breadworld.com*; *Creative Breads*, Lesaffre Yeast Corp. 2003)