Bread & baking / United States

Whole Wheat Sandwich Bread

A tender, slightly sweet whole-grain loaf built for the everyday sandwich — soft enough to compress under a knife without tearing, with just enough whole wheat earthiness to make you feel like you've done something right.

Time 210 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 50 parts Whole wheat flour
- ☐ 50 parts All-purpose flour
- ☐ 72 parts Warm water (105°F)
- ☐ 1.2 parts Instant dry yeast
- ☐ 4 parts Honey
- ☐ 1.8 parts Fine salt
- ☐ 3 parts Neutral oil (canola or sunflower)

Let's make it.

01 Combine both flours with the warm water and mix until no dry flour remains. Cover and rest for 20 minutes. This brief soaker hydrates the bran in the whole wheat flour, giving it time to absorb water and soften the sharp bran edges that would otherwise cut through the gluten network and produce a dense, crumbly loaf. Whole wheat bran is hygroscopic — pre-hydrating it dramatically improves the final crumb's tenderness.

02 Add yeast, honey, salt, and oil to the soaked flour mixture. Mix on low in a stand mixer until combined, then increase to medium and knead for 8–10 minutes. The dough will be softer and stickier than white bread dough due to the whole wheat's lower gluten yield. Resist adding extra flour — a slightly tacky dough produces a moister, more tender loaf. The dough is ready when it passes a rough windowpane: thin enough to see light, even if it tears slightly.

03 After doubling, punch down the dough and turn onto a lightly floured surface. Pat into a rectangle roughly the width of your 9×5 loaf pan. Fold the two short ends toward the center, then roll the dough away from you into a tight cylinder. Pinch the seam closed. Place seam-side down in a greased 9×5 pan. The cylinder should fill the pan 60–70% full. Cover and proof until the crown rises 2–3cm above the pan rim, about 45–60 minutes at 75°F.

04 Bake at 375°F (190°C) for 30–35 minutes until the top is deep golden brown and the internal temperature reaches 190–195°F (88–90°C). An instant-read thermometer is the most reliable test. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then unmold and cool completely on a wire rack — at least 1 hour. The crumb sets as it cools; slicing early produces a gummy texture and compresses the slices permanently.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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