

Challah
Adapted from Sara Volovik
Pareve

2 packages dry yeast (even if you use rapid rise yeast, follow directions as indicated in this recipe). I prefer Hodgson Mills yeast.

2 cups warm water

½ cup sugar

1 tablespoon kosher salt

7 cups of King Arthur Bread flour (or more if needed)

2 eggs

½ cup oil

raisins (optional)

Glaze:

4 beaten egg yolks

Optional toppings:

Poppy or sesame seeds, “everything mix”, za’atar, honey

Dissolve yeast in warm water in a very large bowl. When dissolved, add sugar, salt and half of the flour. Mix well. Add eggs and oil, then slowly stir in most of the remaining flour-dough will become quite thick.

When dough begins to pull away from sides of bowl, turn onto floured board and knead for about 10 minutes. Add only enough flour to make dough manageable. Knead until dough is smooth and elastic and springs back when pressed lightly with fingertip.

Place dough in a large oiled bowl. Turn it so the top is oiled as well. Cover with a damp towel (or cover loosely with aluminum foil) and let rise in a warm place for 1-2 hours (punching down in four or five places every 20 minutes). (I don’t usually punch it down at all.)

“Take” challah (separate a small piece-about the size of an olive) with a blessing. (*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha’olam, asher kidshanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu l’ha-frish challah.*) The “separate” piece of dough should be baked apart from the rest of the dough. Divide dough into 4 parts for regular size challot or divide the dough into 8 parts for small loaves. Each of these balls of dough will then be either rolled into one long rope for

spiral challah, or divided into 5 small ropes to be braided together. Be sure to flour your work surface and your hands and then shape the dough**. Place in well-greased loaf pans (for loaves) or on greased baking sheets/parchment paper-lined baking sheets (for braided or spiral) parchment Let rise until double in bulk (approximately 1/2 hour or less).

**For braided challot or spiral shaped for the holidays, a few raisins may be added to each strand as you prepare to braid or twist the challah into shape.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Brush tops of loaves with beaten eggs (optional: sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds or drizzle honey on top after glazing with the egg wash). Bake 45 minutes or until browned. Remove from pans and cool on racks.

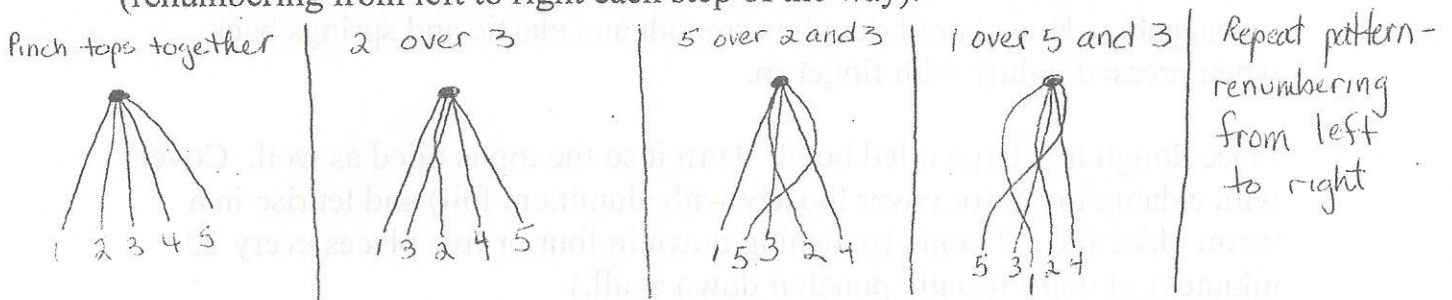
Yield: 4 full size challot or 8 small challot

Shaping the challah:

Loaf: If you are in a rush, break off small balls of dough and put them side by side in a loaf pan so that the dough takes up about 2/3 of the pan.

Five strand braid:

Make 5 ropes with the challah dough. Pinch the tops together. Place strand 2 over 3. Place 5 over 2 and 3. Place 1 over 5 and 3. Repeat the pattern (renumbering from left to right each step of the way).



Spiral: Coil the dough on top of itself, working from the middle of the bottom up and out. Curl back in at the top and tuck the end into the center.

