

**Season:** Year round  
**Type:** Bread  
**Difficulty:** Easy  
**Country of origin:** Italy  
**Serves:** Approx. 18 servings  
**Source:** Catherine Bell, Everyday Epicurean

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### Equipment

- Measuring cups
- Large mixing bowl
- Measuring jug and spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Pastry brush
- Large baking tray with a lip

### Ingredients

- ½ cup luke warm water
  - 2 teaspoons instant dried yeast
  - 2 cups plain flour
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - 1 teaspoon honey
  - 1 tablespoon olive oil
  - Extra olive oil
  - Flaky salt and freshly ground pepper
  - Fennel, sesame (white and/or black), caraway or poppy seeds; or grated parmesan or tasty cheese; or finely chopped rosemary or thyme
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### How to make it

1. Measure the water carefully in a measuring jug. Sprinkle the dried yeast over, stir and leave until it is foaming. This tells you the yeast is working.
2. Measure the flour and salt into a large bowl and mix to distribute the salt.
3. Make a well in the middle and pour in the honey, olive oil and yeast mixture. Combine and knead well until smooth and springy when you poke it with your finger. Form into a ball.
4. Put the ball of dough into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a tea towel and allow it to stand in a draught-free spot until the dough has doubled in size - about 1 hour. This is called proving the dough.
5. Gently 'knock back' the dough by pushing your fist into the dough to expel the air. Form into a ball again and leave the dough to double in size again - about 30 minutes.
6. While the dough is rising again, preheat the oven to 180°C.
7. Drizzle a large baking tray (use one that has a lip on all sides) with olive oil and sprinkle over salt, pepper and the seeds you have chosen to use.
8. Break off small pieces of dough the size of a walnut and roll each into a thin sausage about 25 cm long. It is easier to roll the dough on an unfloured bench so the dough shouldn't be sticky. Do this quickly as you want to bake them before they start to rise again.
9. Transfer the grissini to the prepared tray and roll them in the oil and seeds. Or you can use a pastry brush to brush on the oil. Space them well apart on the tray. Use plenty of olive oil as this is what makes them golden and delicious.

10. Bake for 15 minutes until golden and crisp. Transfer the grissini to a rack to cool. For extra shine brush them with olive oil again while hot.

### Notes:

- Yeast is a living thing. The dried version is dormant and needs to be re-activated before using. This is done most easily by sprinkling it over luke warm water. You can add a pinch of sugar to the water to give the yeast some food but this is not necessary if the yeast is fresh (always check the expiry date). NB: Hot water will kill the yeast and cold water will not allow it to activate.

Unlike some other dried baker's yeasts, Elfin instant dry yeast does not require to be 'started' in warm water before use. It can be added to the flour straight from the packet. However to demonstrate the wonder of yeast to the children we suggest you show the activation process. For best results follow the instructions for the particular brand you are using.

- As a rule of thumb allow 7.5 grams or 1½ teaspoons dried yeast per 500 grams flour. You can add more yeast if you want a faster rise or reduce the yeast if the dough is to rise very slowly.
- Fresh/dry equivalents:  
1 packet dried yeast = 15 grams or 1 tablespoon  
1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) dried yeast = 1 tablespoon (15 grams) compressed (fresh) yeast
- Serve with: dips, as a snack, on an antipasti platter or with soup.

### Making dough in advance

Bread dough can be 'retarded' by refrigerating it, so if you need a dough ready for the morning class, you can make one the night before, place it in a well-oiled bowl, cover well and refrigerate it overnight. It will rise slowly. Bring to room temperature for 30 minutes and let it rise for the second time. However, have the children make a dough – which can then be used by the second class.

### How to prove bread quickly

You can do a fast rise in the microwave if you are short of time: This will not give bread that has as much flavor as a slow rise but is a handy hint to know. Cover the bowl with the dough with plastic wrap. For every 15 minutes of normal proving time give it five 5 seconds on high in the microwave and a five minute rest. So one hour's worth of proving can be done in 20 minutes 20 seconds.

### Skills:

- Using yeast, kneading, proving dough, rolling dough, **key skill\***

\* Key skill: Definition