**Original Pizza Dough Recipe**

Servings: 4 (Makes two 12-ounce dough balls, or two 12-inch thin-crust pizzas)

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Total Time: 20 Minutes, plus 90 minutes rising time

**Ingredients**

3 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled-off, plus more for dusting

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2-1/4 teaspoons instant/quick-rise yeast (1 packet; see note)

1-3/4 teaspoons salt

1 cup warm water (see note)

Cornmeal, for dusting the pan before baking

**Instructions**

Combine the flour, oil, yeast, salt, and water in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook.

Mix on low speed until the dough comes together. Increase the speed to medium-low and knead until the dough is smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes. (Alternatively, you can knead the dough by hand.)

Transfer the dough to a lightly oiled large bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a damp kitchen towel and let it rise in a warm place until it has doubled in size, about 1 hour.

When the dough has risen, punch it down and place it on a lightly floured surface. If you're planning to make one large pizza, roll the dough into a ball. If you're planning to make two, cut the dough in half and roll each piece into a ball.

If you’re not using the pizza dough right away, lightly coat the dough ball(s) with olive oil. Place into freezer bag(s) and seal shut, squeezing out all the air. Refrigerate for up to 2 days. When ready to use, let the dough sit out on the countertop for 30 minutes to warm up before stretching. The dough can also be frozen for up to 3 months. When ready to use, defrost in the refrigerator overnight (or for at least 12 hours), and then let it warm up on the countertop for about 30 minutes before stretching and proceeding with your pizza recipe.

If you're planning to use the dough right away, cover the dough ball(s) with a damp kitchen towel and let rest for 15 to 20 minutes (the dough will rise a bit). Using your hands, stretch the dough to the desired shape. Proceed with your pizza recipe, or follow the general baking instructions below.

General Baking Instructions: Preheat the oven to 500°F and set an oven rack in the bottom position. Dust a 13x18-inch baking sheet lightly with cornmeal. Place the stretched dough on the baking sheet, and gently stretch it out again so that it maintains its shape. Spread your sauce over the dough, leaving a 1/2-inch border around the edges. Slide the baking sheet into the oven and bake for 5 to 7 minutes, until the crust is partially cooked. Remove from the oven and scatter the cheese and toppings over the sauce. Slide the pan back into the oven and cook until the crust is golden brown and the cheese is melted and bubbling, 4 to 6 minutes more. Remove the pizza from the oven and transfer to a cutting board. Slice and serve.

Note: Active dry yeast may be used instead of instant yeast, however the dough will take longer to rise. To give active dry yeast a boost, you can dissolve it in the warm water and let it sit until frothy, about 10 minutes. Following that, add it to the mixing bowl with the flour, oil, and salt and proceed with the recipe.

Note: The water should be warm to the touch — not hot — as anything over 130°F will kill the yeast and keep the dough from rising. It’s not necessary to measure the temperature, but you’re aiming for around 105°F.