

Yeast Bread Handling and Storage

Holding baked bread: To prevent staling or hardening (see Note below)

- Never refrigerate unless filled with custard or meat.
- Never hold in cool or drafty place even if wrapped.
- Staling occurs most rapidly between 20 and 50° F.
- Cool products to an interior temperature of 90° F., then wrap.
- Hold products at 70-95° F. and under 110° F.

Crusty breads:

- Store in packaging with end open or in breathable plastic bags.
- Use the day they are made or freeze immediately after cooling to interior temperature of 90° F.

Refresh and warm breads just prior to serving:

- Warm bread before serving if it is 60° F. or colder
- Place crusty breads/rolls in very hot oven, unwrapped, for 2 to 5 minutes.
- Soft rolls may be wrapped/covered and placed in a very hot oven for 5 minutes to warm, or placed in a food warmer at 95–105° F.
- Do not warm breads in microwave—they are too easily over-heated and will harden more rapidly.
- Keep warm breads covered as long as possible; hold in a 95° F. place.

Freezing: Freezing bread the day it is baked will mean the bread is the same as day-old when thawed.

(Holding bread at 70-95° F. in a draft free place for 24 hours will be the same result.)

- Freeze bread if it will be two days before use.
- Wrap in air-tight, freezer-suitable packaging. Label with "date in" "date out" information.
- Freeze and maintain frozen rolls or breads at 0° F.
- Breads will keep frozen for several weeks.
- Rotate breads in freezer so first in is first out.
- Never shake ice crystals from packages when taking out of freezer. This moisture is needed for a quality thawed product—it came from the bread.

Waste not: Turn day-old bread into an asset:

- Make fresh bread crumbs—toast them and sprinkle on entrees or veggies.
- Butter or drizzle with garlic oil, cut into cubes, toast for croutons.
- Use for grilled sandwiches or French toast.
- Toast round slices for Bruschetta or toast for canapes.
- Donate to food bank and get tax receipt for simply helping others in the community.

Source: Sharon Davis, *Family & Consumer Sciences Ed., Breads the Significant Edge*. www.wheatfoods.org

Note: If yeast breads or rolls seem to harden even when sealed, check the room temperature. If room is too cool (50° F. or cooler and has air blowing from ducts over product), staling will occur more rapidly.