

Ciabatta Baking Times and Temperatures*

Type of oven	Steam	Loading temperature	Baking temperature	Initial bake time (min)	Vent time (min)	Total bake time (min)
home using a baking stone with lid	n/a	260 °C / 500 °F	245 °C / 470 °F	25-30 (lid on)	10 (lid off)	35-40
combi	press steam once every min for the first 5 min	220 °C / 425 °F, full fan speed	220 °C / 425 °F, full fan speed	17-21	4-5	21-26
convection	upon closing the oven door	220 °C / 425 °F, full fan speed	220 °C / 425 °F, full fan speed	20-22	5	25-27
deck	upon closing the oven door	245 °C / 470 °F	245 °C / 470 °F	15-25	10	25-35
wood-fired	use water sprayer to spray water for 1 min onto oven walls (see page 3-364)	235 °C / 460 °F	235 °C / 460 °F	17-20	n/a	17-20

*Generally, for ciabatta, 250 g, 500 g, and 1 kg loaves will require the same amount of time to bake because all should be the same height/thickness. Consistent height/thickness doesn't apply for various other loaves. Consider the different bake times required for a baguette and a bâtard: although both breads are oval, their height and width vary, so the core of each requires a different amount of time to bake.

KEYS TO SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTING HIGH HYDRATION RECIPES

- The 1 kg yield of the base recipe is not enough for the hook of the stand mixer to catch all the ingredients and mix a uniform dough in an 8 qt bowl. Use a paddle attachment instead of a hook for the initial mix if the mixer is not catching the dough. If you use a paddle for the initial mix, switch to a hook for the final mix.
- To measure the yeast volume, fill a 1/8 tsp volume measure halfway.
- You can cold-proof the master Ciabatta in the refrigerator at 4 °C / 40 °F for 3-4 h or at 13 °C / 55 °F for 2h.
- If hand-mixing, refrigerate the dough during bulk fermentation. Take the dough out of the refrigerator only for folds. Additional folds and rests may be necessary to achieve full gluten development.
- Home baking tip: after you divide the dough, place the pieces on the back of a sheet pan or cookie tray covered with parchment paper for proofing. When you are ready to bake, simply slide the parchment paper, with the dough on top, from the sheet pan or cookie tray directly onto the baking stone.
- Ciabatta is not scored because of its high hydration; cutting cleanly through wet dough is very difficult.
- Our ciabatta is 87.37% hydration; we use the double-hydration mixing method (see page 3-106) when we mix the dough, which means we add water to the dough in two separate steps. The first addition of water helps develop gluten. Adding all the water at once would be too much for the flour to absorb, but once medium gluten development is achieved, the remaining water is added, hydrating the dough further. We also use the water from the second addition to dissolve the salt.
- Ciabatta dough can be difficult to handle because it is so wet, but with some practice, it will become easier to work with this high-hydration dough (for tips on handling wet doughs, see page 3-144).
- If you use a food processor to make ciabatta, it will produce a tight crumb, which is atypical for this bread.
- It can be difficult to weigh ciabatta because the dough is so wet and hard to handle. Instead of weighing it, you can visually divide the dough before you use a bench knife to cut into it. For example, visualize cutting the 1 kg of dough into four 250 g squares or rectangles. Good eyeballing skills are a must. For more on how to visually divide a dough, see page 3-137.