

New York Bagels

from Charles Van Over's book, *The Best Bread Ever*

yield: 6 bagels

unbleached bread flour	500g (3-1/3 to 4 cups)
brown sugar	20g (4 teaspoons)
fine sea salt	10g (2 teaspoons)
instant yeast	1 teaspoon
water	9-1/2 oz*

baking soda	1 teaspoon
sugar	15g (1 tablespoon)

sesame, poppy, or caraway seeds, coarse salt, or dried minced onion for garnish
cornmeal for the baking sheet

*Important: The water should be slightly cooler than normal than tap water. It's best if it's about 60°. Use an instant-read thermometer.

1. Generously sprinkle baking sheet with cornmeal and set aside
2. Place the flour, brown sugar, salt, and yeast in a food processor fitted with a metal blade. With the machine running, pour all but 2 tablespoons of the water through the feed tube. Process for an additional 20-25 seconds, adding the remaining water if the dough seems dry and does not come together in a ball during this time.
3. Stop the machine and let the dough rest in the processor bowl for 5 minutes. It will noticeably soften as it rests. Then process for for 25 seconds longer.
4. Stop the machine and take the temperature of the dough with an instant-read thermometer. It should be between 75° and 80°. If the temperature is lower than 75°, process the dough for an additional 5-10 seconds, up to twice more, until it reaches the desired temperature. If the temperature is higher than 80°, scrape the dough from the processor into an ungreased bowl and refrigerate for 5 to 10 minutes (check after 5 minutes). It should be 80° or cooler by that time.
5. Scrape the dough onto a lightly floured work surface. It will be relatively firm. With a dough scraper or kitchen knife, divide the dough into 6 equal pieces.
6. To form the bagels, take each piece of dough and roll it into a ball. Flatten the ball, then fold it in half, sealing the edges with your fingertips. Then fold again to form a tight cylinder. Roll the dough into a tube about 9 inches long. Wrap this piece around your hand, overlapping the dough about 2 inches. Pinch the ends together to form a ring. (The hole will be in the right proportion to the dough once the bagel is proofed, boiled, and baked). Repeat with the remaining dough pieces and transfer them to the baking sheet spacing them 2 inches apart.
7. Rub a bit of flour on the top of each bagel, then cover the sheet loosely with plastic wrap (the flour is to keep the wrap from sticking to the dough as it ferments). Place the bagels in the refrigerator for 12 to 16 hours, preferably overnight.
8. The next day, one hour before baking, put a rack second shelf from the bottom of the oven. If you have a baking stone, put it on the rack, and preheat the oven to 450°. (If no stone, you can wait until 20 minutes before baking to preheat the oven, but continue on with the next step).
9. Take the bagels from the refrigerator. Remove the plastic wrap and let them proof at room temperature (70°-72°) for 20 to 25 minutes. While the bagels are proofing, bring a 4-qt pot of water to a boil. Add the baking soda and sugar. Sprinkle a clean baking sheet with cornmeal.
10. Test to see that the bagels are proofed: an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of one should be 55° to 60°.
11. Set a colander in the sink. Drop one bagel into the water. If it floats, this means the bagels are proofed and ready to be boiled and baked. Boil the bagel for 5 to 10 seconds. Use a slotted spoon to turn it over and boil it for another 5 to 10 seconds. Transfer the bagel from the boiling water to drain in the colander. Boil the remaining bagels, one at a

time, in the rapidly boiling water for no more than 10 seconds on each side, then drain them in the colander. Do not be concerned if the bagels sit on top of each other while draining. They are resilient and will regain their shape when baked.

12. Transfer the drained bagels to the baking sheet, spaced two inches apart. While the bagels are still wet from the boiling, sprinkle them with the optional toppings.

13. Place the baking sheet in the oven. Reduce the heat to 425° and bake for about 10 minutes. Open the oven and rotate the tray of bagels so that they brown evenly. Continue baking for 5 to 10 minutes longer until the bagels are uniformly browned.

14. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and transfer the bagels to a wire rack to cool. Serve the bagels warm from the oven, or let them cool completely before storing.

Store the bagels in a paper bag for up to 24 hours. For longer storage, place in plastic bags in the freezer. They will keep frozen for up to one month. Thaw them at room temperature for 10 minutes before reheating.