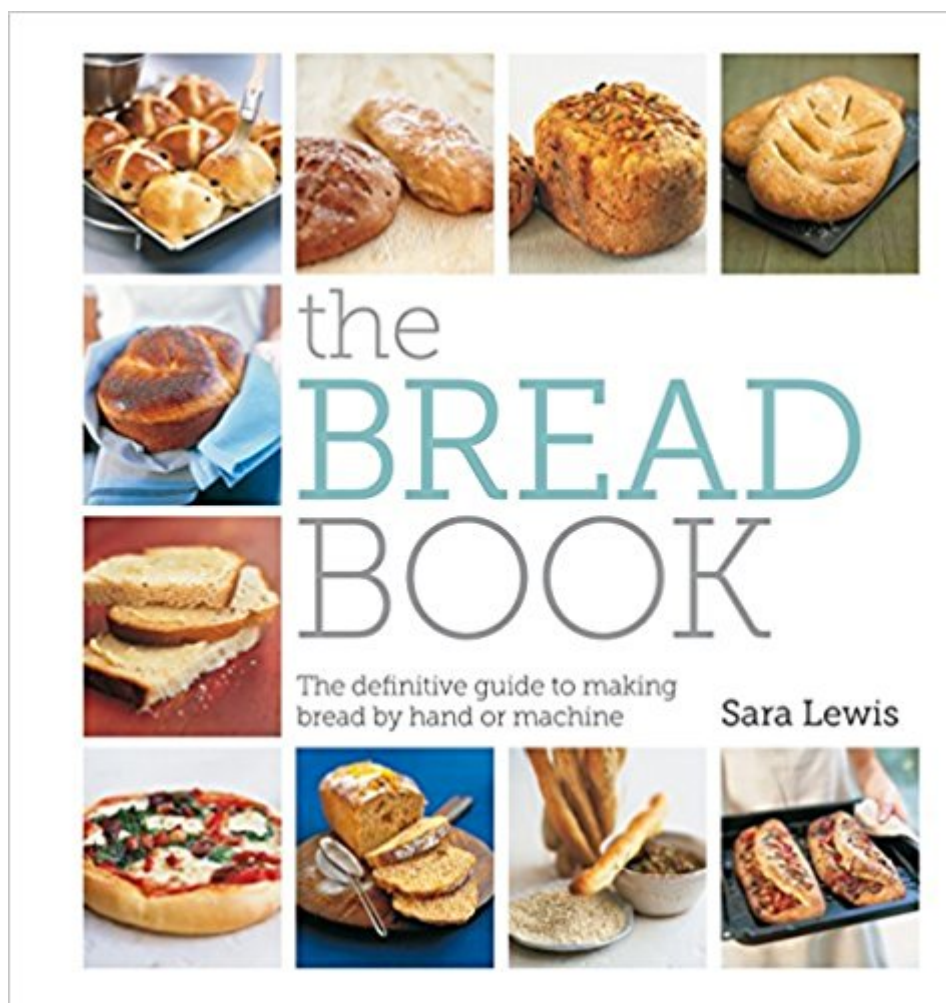


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# The Bread Book: The Definitive Guide To Making Bread By Hand Or Machine



## Synopsis

Wow your family and friends with delicious homemade bread! Discover a range of flavors and techniques, and work bread into your weekly routine. This essential recipe book tells you everything you need to know about bread making and shows you just how easy shaping and baking your own bread can be. With 75 recipes ranging from a traditional Granary Loaf to Feta and Spinach Twists, Cheese and Chutney Corkscrews, Pretzels, Doughnuts and international favorites such as Focaccia and Brioche. Step-by-step instructions to help you master the basic techniques, along with tricks of the trade to help you achieve the perfect finish!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sara Lewis was the cookery editor of Practical Parenting magazine for over 12 years. She is the author of Kids in the Kitchen and Gourmet Low Carb, published by Hamlyn.

I am new to the bread machine and baking. I am a homebrewer so I thought I would try it out. This book came as a recommendation from a friend. I am glad I listened. The best part of this book is the explanation of why things happen the way they do and why it's really important to do exactly what the recipe says. As a long time homebrewer I can tell you the margin for error is much more tolerant when making beer. So I needed a book that clearly spelled out why a "pinch of this" and a "dash of that" was not going to work. :)

My cousin Lilly bought me this book many years ago when she found out I bought a bread machine.

When I had to move to a different country and I had to leave all my cook books behind. I just ordered another copy of this book, because it had recipes of sweet bread my grandmother used to make. It's a great book. If you really enjoy bread, this is a book you should have on your shelf. It's not only for bread machines, but for hand home-made bread too. "You will love it".

this book is great, they have some really great receipes in here,

I was disappointed in this book.<sup>1</sup> I was hoping for more recipes for wholesome, grainy breads. The recipes that did interest me used "malthouse flour" which is a concoction available only in the United Kingdom, and even if you can find a company which exports it, it would cost all 4 of my appendages!<sup>2</sup> Ingredients for recipes are given in metric system, although a conversion is given as well.<sup>3</sup> I have had this book for several years and to date have not tried a single recipe!

I received a bread machine for my birthday and purchased this book to supplement the booklet that came with the machine. My favorite bread so far has been the Feta Spinach Twist. The book includes a table of contents and index, which makes navigating the book easy. The instructions are complete and often have great pictures. The beginning of the book covers all of the special techniques you need to know and it was helpful having them all in the same spot. Each recipe includes two sets of instructions so that you can make the bread with a machine or by hand.

I've had this book for some time now... and made a lot of recipes from it. They're easy to do recipes and it's very handy that you can choose between making them by machine (in 3 sizes) or hand (which I prefer). There is a wide scale of variety; sandwich loafs, sweet and savory bread. Lovely sweet breads and rolls. I think it's a very good book for beginning bakers, they don't start with sourdoughs and things. A very logical thing by the way, because it's not a good idea to bake sourdough in your machine (The acids will damage the lining, also because those would need longer rises)

This 'the bread book' by Sara Lewis is subtitled 'The definitive guide to making bread by hand or machine'. This subtitle claim is definitively wrong, in that the book has only 140 pages of text to cover both manual and bread machine bread baking. In contrast, there are books on yeast breads alone that do not cover bread making machines or gluten-free breads that run to over 600 pages. One may argue that the book achieves its 'definitive' credentials by covering, however briefly,

all bread making topics. This claim is clearly unfounded, as the book makes no mention whatsoever of sourdough, sponges, poolish, or any other type of artisanal breadmaking. The 'definitive' claim may be based on the dual focus on both manual and bread machine techniques. However, I believe this dual approach betrays the reader in that manual methods are severely compromised to fit the order of operations needed to use a bread machine in order that the procedures for the two techniques can be laid out in parallel. The clearest example is in the recipe for the 'Farmhouse white loaf' where the first step in the manual procedure simply duplicates by hand what the machine is doing. In a procedure optimized for hand or hand plus stand mixer technique, the yeast is bloomed in warm water with sugar before adding it to the dough, salt is not added until the yeast and flour have been well mixed so the salt does not impede the yeast action, and the butter is not added until the dough has been thoroughly kneaded. The dependence on the bread machine paradigm also leads to handmade recipes that would probably not pass muster with anyone with a devotion to tradition. Every other recipe I have ever seen for brioche requires at least 8 hours for the dough to rise before baking. This book specifies less than an hour. If you make this recipe, it will probably be tasteless, it will probably simply not be brioche. I also suspect that the book is ignoring the difference between two different types of US yeast packaging and labeling. Fleischmann's and every other US producer call the type of yeast that is bloomed in warm water and sugar 'active dry yeast'. The yeast for bread machines which does not require advance blooming is labeled instant or fast acting yeast. This book uses the term 'active dry yeast' as if it were 'instant' yeast. I suspect the recipes work if you use 'active dry yeast', but I am not sure you will achieve optimal results. It is very important for US readers to know that this book was written in England and uses a UK vernacular throughout. On the good side, this means that all measurements larger than teaspoon or tablespoon are given in metric weight or volume, Imperial weight or volume, and by cup. All oven settings are also given in Fahrenheit, Centigrade, and Gas Mark. This is all very ecumenical, but it means that the book may be just a little tougher reading for a Yankee than it is for a Brit. There is a very handy conversion table for UK to US terms at the beginning of the book, but the number of entries just goes to show how much mental translation us Yanks will have to do as we read the book. After so many negative findings in this book, I think it deserves some positive comments. The first is that the range of bread types covered by the book is quite broad. It is impressive to see that a bread machine is capable of doing such diverse products as pretzels, spiral (roulade) breads, fougasse, and corn bread. The caveat is that for some of the more diversely shaped breads as pretzels and roulades, the bread machine simply does not do the whole job. Rather, it typically mixes the ingredients, kneads, and does a first or first and second rise. The final shaping and baking must be

done in a conventional oven. In summary, for UK savvy readers, the book is very readable, its instructions are easy to follow, and it will probably give acceptable results; however, its pretensions on being definitive are misleading, and it should probably only be used by those who have and like using a bread machine. For Yanks who don't want a bread machine, get any one of the dozen good books on breadmaking by Peter Reinhart, Nancy Silverton, Rose Levy Beranbaum, or Bernard Clayton.

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