

# Basic Pasta Dough

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**Makes about 1 ¼ pounds**

3 ½ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for kneading  
5 large eggs

## **Directions:**

Mound the flour in the center of a large wooden board. Make a well in the center of the flour and add the eggs. Using a fork, beat the eggs together and then begin to incorporate the flour, starting with the inner rim of the well. As you expand the well, keep pushing the flour up to retain the well shape (do not worry if it looks messy). When half of the flour is incorporated, the dough will begin to come together. Start kneading the dough, using primarily the palms of your hands. Once the dough is a cohesive mass, set the dough aside and scrape up and discard any dried bits of dough.

Lightly flour the board and continue kneading for 10 minutes, dusting the board with additional flour as necessary. The dough should be elastic and a little sticky. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and allow to rest for 30 minutes at room temperature before using.

Cut the dough into 4 pieces, and wrap 3 of them again in plastic or just cover with a slightly damp kitchen towel. Flatten the piece of dough into a burger shape that is somewhat thicker in the middle and about ¼ inch thick at the edges. Set the rollers of your pasta machine with a bit of flour to be sure they are completely dry, and make sure there aren't any bits of dried dough from last time. Using one hand, crank the handle to start the rollers, and feed the dough in with your other hand. As the flattened piece of dough emerges, catch it gently with a flat palm so as not to tear it. Fold the dough in thirds, flatten it with your palms, and roll it out again. Repeat this process 5 times, then set the rollers to the next-thinnest setting and repeat the folding and rolling process 6 times. At the third setting, repeat the process only 3 times, since the dough will be becoming more delicate. If the pasta sheet becomes too long to work with easily, cut it into two pieces and continue. As you work, dust the pasta sheet with a tiny touch of flour only if it seems to be sticking. Roll the dough out through the progressively thinner settings, without folding it again, until you have reached the thinnest setting, depending on the specific recipe. Do not pull the sheets of pasta out of the machine; rather, support each one lightly underneath as it emerges from the machine. The sheets are now ready to form into large ravioli, or cut into strands. Allow the cut pieces to dry for a bit on a board or floured work surface.

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