Make soda bread

What you need

- **500g stoneground wholemeal plain flour**
- **100g butter**
- **2 level tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- **1 level tsp salt**
- **1 level tsp caster sugar**
- **284ml carton buttermilk**
- **4 tbsp milk**
- **A baking sheet, buttered**
- **Long-bladed knife**
- **Wire cooling rack**

This delicious traditional Irish bread is often eaten with stews and soups or butter and jam. It's quick to make and, unlike lots of other bread, you don't have to knead it (squeeze it hard with your hands). The "soda" in soda bread is bicarbonate of soda. This is a raising agent used instead of yeast, which is usually used in bread. A raising agent causes a chemical reaction called fermentation, which makes the dough rise and the bread go fluffy inside.

This recipe serves eight people and takes 45 minutes to make. You can replace the buttermilk with the same amount of yoghurt or whole milk. If you use milk, first mix it with a dash of white or apple cider vinegar or lemon juice and leave to stand for 20 minutes.

Instructions

1 Heat the oven to 220˚C. Tip the flour into a bowl, add the butter and rub them together until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in the bicarbonate of soda, salt and caster sugar.

2 Mix the buttermilk and milk in a jug. Pour into the flour mixture and mix to a soft dough.

3 Tip the dough out onto a floured surface and shape it into a ball. Place the ball on a baking sheet and flatten it slightly, then ask an adult to help you cut a deep cross into the top using a long-bladed knife, cutting almost all the way through the loaf.

4 Bake in the centre of the oven for 25–30 minutes, or until the loaf has risen. Remove the loaf from the oven and put it on a wire rack to cool.

Allergy information Ingredients in **bold** are allergens. Allergens are substances that can cause allergic reactions in some people. If you have a food allergy, carefully check the items listed. You can find more information at tinyurl.com/TWJ-allergy

WARNING! Ask an adult for help when using a hot oven.

THE TAP TEST You can tell a loaf of bread is properly baked by tapping its base. If it sounds hollow, it's ready.

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