

Bread

Bread is a staple food prepared by baking a dough of flour and water.^[1] It may be leavened or unleavened. Salt, fat and a leavening agent such as yeast are common ingredients, though breads may contain a range of other ingredients: milk, egg, sugar, spice, fruit(such as raisins), vegetables (such as onion), nuts (such as walnuts) or seeds (such as poppy seeds). Bread is one of the oldest prepared foods, dating back to the Neolithic era. The development of leavened bread can probably also be traced to prehistoric times.

Fresh bread is prized for its taste, aroma and texture. Retaining its freshness is important to keep it appetizing. Bread that has stiffened or dried past its prime is said to be stale. Modern bread is sometimes wrapped in paper or plastic film, or stored in an airtight container such as a breadbox to keep it fresh longer. Bread that is kept in warm, moist environments is prone to the growth of mold. Bread kept at low temperatures, for example, in a refrigerator, will develop mold growth more slowly than bread kept at room temperature. However, unwrapped bread kept in a typical household refrigerator will turn stale quickly due to the low humidity of the air.

The inner, soft part of bread is known to bakers and other culinary professionals as the *crumb*, which is not to be confused with small bits of bread that often fall off, called *crumbs*. The outer hard portion of bread is called the *crust*.

Usage

Bread can be served at any temperature. Once baked, it can subsequently be toasted. It is most commonly picked up and eaten with the hands, or sometimes with a knife and fork. It can be eaten by itself or as a carrier for another, usually less compact food. Bread may be dunked or dipped into a liquid (such as beef gravy, olive oil, or sardine pâté), topped with various spreads, both sweet and savory, or serve as the enclosure for the ubiquitous sandwich with any number of meats, cheeses, vegetables or condiments inside.

Etymology

The word itself, Old English *bread*, is common in various forms to many Germanic languages; such as Frisian *brea*, Dutch *brood*, German *Brot*, Swedish *bröd*, Norwegian and Danish *brød* (in Portuguese *broa*); it has been claimed to be derived from the root of *brew*. However, it may be connected with the root of *break*, for its early uses are confined to *broken pieces*, or *bits* of bread, the Latin *crustum*, and it was not until the 12th century that it took the place—as the generic name for bread—of *hlaf* (*hlaifs* in Gothic: modern English *loaf*), which appears to be the oldest Teutonic name; Old High German *hleib* and modern German *Laib*, or Finnish *leipä*, Estonian *leib*, and Russian *хлеб* (*khleb*) are similar (all are derived from the Old German word for "loaf").

History

Bread from Pompeii

Bread is one of the oldest prepared foods, dating back to the Neolithic era. The first breads produced were probably cooked versions of a grain-paste, made from ground cereal grains and water, and may have been developed by accidental cooking or deliberate experimentation with water and grain flour. Descendants of these early breads are still commonly made from various grains worldwide, including the Iranian (Persian) *lavashs*, *tabuns*, *sangaks*, Mexican *tortilla*, Indian *chapatis*, *rotis* and *naans*, Scottish *oatcake*, North

American *jonnycake*, Middle Eastern *pita*, and Ethiopian *injera*. The basic flat breads of this type also formed a staple in the diet of many early civilizations with the Sumerians eating a type of barley flat cake, and the 12th century BC Egyptians being able to purchase a flat bread called *ta* from stalls in the village streets.^[2]

The development of leavened bread can probably also be traced to prehistoric times. Yeast spores occur everywhere, including the surface of cereal grains, so any dough left to rest will become naturally leavened. Although leavening is likely of prehistoric origin, the earliest archaeological evidence is from ancient Egypt. Scanning electron microscopy has detected yeast cells in some ancient Egyptian loaves. However, ancient Egyptian bread was made from emmer wheat and has a dense crumb. In cases where yeast cells are not visible, it is difficult, by visual examination, to determine whether the bread was leavened. As a result, the extent to which bread was leavened in ancient Egypt remains uncertain.^[3]

There were multiple sources of leavening available for early bread. Airborne yeasts could be harnessed by leaving uncooked dough exposed to air for some time before cooking. Pliny the Elder reported that the Gauls and Iberians used the foam skimmed from beer to produce "a lighter kind of bread than other peoples." Parts of the ancient world that drank wine instead of beer used a paste composed of grape juice and flour that was allowed to begin fermenting, or wheat bran steeped in wine, as a source for yeast. The most common source of leavening however was to retain a piece of dough from the previous day to utilize as a form of sourdough starter.^[4]

Even within antiquity there was a wide variety of breads available. In the Deipnosophistae, the Greek author Athenaeus describes some of the breads, cakes, cookies, and pastries available in the Classical world. Among the breads mentioned are griddle cakes, honey-and-oil bread, mushroom shaped loaves covered in poppy seeds, and the military specialty of rolls baked on a spit. The type and quality of flour used to produce bread could also vary as noted by Diphilus when he declared "bread made of wheat, as compared with that made of barley, is more nourishing, more digestible, and in every way superior." In order of merit, the bread made from refined [thoroughly sieved] flour comes first, after that bread from ordinary wheat, and then the unbolted, made of flour that has not been sifted."^[5]



 Peasants sharing bread, from the *Livre du roi Modus et de la reine Ratio*, France, 14th century. ([Bibliothèque nationale](#))

Within medieval Europe bread served not only as a staple food but also as part of the table service. In the standard table setting of the day the trencher, a piece of stale bread roughly 6 inches by 4 inches (15 cm by 10 cm), served as an absorbent plate. At the completion of a meal the trencher could then be eaten, given to the poor, or fed to the dogs. It was not until the fifteenth century that trenchers made of wood started to replace the bread variety.^[6]

Otto Frederick Rohwedder is considered to be the father of sliced bread. In 1912 Rohwedder started work on inventing a machine that sliced bread, but bakeries were reluctant to use it since they were concerned the sliced bread would go stale. It

was not until 1928, when Rohwedder invented a machine that both sliced and wrapped the bread, that sliced bread caught on. A bakery in Chillicothe, Missouri was the first to use this machine to produce sliced bread.

For generations, white bread was the preferred bread of the rich while the poor ate dark bread. However, in most western societies, the connotations reversed in the late 20th century with dark (whole grain) bread becoming preferred as having superior nutritional value while white bread became associated with lower-class ignorance of nutrition.^[citation needed]

Another major advance happened in 1961 with the development of the Chorleywood Bread Process which used the intense mechanical working of dough to dramatically reduce the fermentation period and the time taken to produce a loaf. The process, whose high-energy mixing allows for the use inferior grain, is now widely used around the world in large factories.

More recently, and especially in smaller retail bakeries, chemical additives are used that both speed up mixing time and reduce necessary fermentation time, so that a batch of bread may be mixed, made up, risen, and baked in less than 3 hours. Dough that does not require fermentation because of chemical additives is called "no-time bread" by commercial bakers. Common additives include reducing agents such as L-cysteine or sodium metabisulfite, and oxidants such as potassium bromate or ascorbic acid.^[7] Often these chemicals are added to dough in the form of a prepackaged base, which also contains most or all of the dough's non-flour ingredients. Using bases and sophisticated chemistry, commercial bakers have made possible the fresh production of imitation artisan and sourdough breads by semi-skilled labor working in smaller shops.

Recently, domestic breadmakers that automate the process of making bread are becoming popular in the home.

Cultural and political importance of bread

As a foodstuff of great historical and contemporary importance, in many cultures in the West and Near and Middle East bread has a significance beyond mere nutrition. The Lord's Prayer, for example, contains the line 'Give us today our daily bread'; here, 'bread' is commonly understood to mean necessities in general. In Israel the most usual phrase in work related demonstrations is "lekhem, avoda" [bread, work], and during the 1950s, the beatnik community used the term bread as a euphemism for money. In Cockney Rhyming Slang, bread means money and is derived from the phrase bread and honey.^[8] The word bread is now commonly used around the world in English speaking countries as a synonym for money (as also is the case with the word dough.) The cultural importance of 'bread' goes beyond slang, however, to serve as a metaphor for basic necessities and living conditions in general. A 'bread-winner' is a household's main economic contributor and has little to do with actual bread-provision, for example. This also goes along with the phrase "putting bread on the table." A remarkable or revolutionary innovation is often referred to as "the greatest thing since sliced bread." In the USSR in 1917, Lenin and his fellow Bolsheviks promised "Peace, Land, and Bread,"^{[9][10]} which thereby became a mainstay slogan of Soviet propaganda^[citation needed]. In Newfoundland, bread was seen as having the power to protect against fairies. The term "breadbasket" is often used to denote an agriculturally productive region. In Slavic cultures bread and salt is offered as a welcome to all guests. In India, life's basic necessities are often referred to as "roti, kapda aur makan" [bread, cloth and house].

The political significance of bread is considerable. In Britain in the nineteenth century the inflated price of bread due to the Corn Laws caused major political and social divisions, and was central to debates over free trade and protectionism. The Assize of Bread and Ale in the thirteenth century showed the importance of bread in medieval times by setting heavy punishments for short-changing bakers, and bread appeared in Magna Carta a half-century earlier.

In contrast, in much of Asia rice is much more prominent as a staple and much of the connotations of bread as a cultural symbol of basic necessities are replaced by rice. To the more conservative elderly generations of Chinese in southern China, the appearance of rice on the table is a fundamental constituent of a meal. Meals made of bread, such as a sandwich, however substantial they may be, are considered as only light snacks in the eyes of the elderly generation.^[*citation needed*]

Types

Bread is a popular food in Western and most other societies, although East Asian societies typically prefer rice or noodles. It is often made from a wheat-flour dough that is cultured with yeast, allowed to rise, and finally baked in an oven. Owing to its high levels of gluten (which give the dough sponginess and elasticity), common wheat (also known as bread wheat) is the most common grain used for the preparation of bread, but bread is also made from the flour of other wheat species (including durum, spelt and emmer), rye, barley, maize (or corn), and oats, usually, but not always, in combination with wheat flour. Although common wheat is best suited for making highly-risen white bread, other wheat species are capable of giving a good crumb. Spelt bread (**Dinkelbrot**) continues to be widely consumed in Germany, and emmer bread was a staple food in ancient Egypt. Canadian bread is known for its heartier consistency due to high protein levels in Canadian flour.

- *White bread* is made from flour containing only the central core of the grain (endosperm).
- *Brown bread* is made with endosperm and 10% bran. It can also refer to white bread with added colouring (often caramel colouring) to make it 'brown'; commonly labeled in America as "Wheat" bread (as opposed to "Whole Wheat" bread.)^[11]
- *Wholemeal bread* contains the whole of the wheat grain (endosperm and bran). It is also referred to as 'whole grain' or 'whole wheat' bread, especially in North America.
- *Wheat germ bread* has added wheat germ for flavoring.
- *Whole grain bread* can refer to the same as 'wholemeal bread', or to white bread with added whole grains to increase its fibre content (i.e. as in "60% whole grain bread").
- *Roti* is a whole wheat based bread eaten in India. Naan is also a variant of Roti.
- *Granary bread* is bread made from granary flour. Trademarked to Hovis, it is made from malted white or brown flour, wheat germ and whole grains.
- *Rye bread* is made with flour from rye grain of variable levels. It is higher in fiber than many common types of bread and is often darker in color and stronger in flavor. In Finland, Baltic States and Russia, rye is popular type of bread.

Composition and chemistry

Formulation

The amount of flour is the most significant measurement in a bread recipe, as it affects texture and crumb the most. Professional bakers use a system of percentages known as *Bakers' Percentage* in their recipe formulations, and measure ingredients by weight instead of by volume. Measurement by weight is much more accurate and consistent than measurement by volume, especially for the dry ingredients.

Flour is always stated as 100%, and the rest of the ingredients are a percent of that amount by weight. Common table bread in the U.S. uses approximately 50% water, resulting in a finely-textured, light, bread. Most artisan bread formulas contain anywhere from 60 to 75% water. In yeast breads, the higher water percentages result in more CO₂ bubbles, and a coarser bread crumb. One pound (~ 450 g) of flour will yield a standard loaf of bread, or two French loaves.

Calcium propionate is commonly added by commercial bakeries to retard the growth of molds.

Flour

Flour is a product made from grain that has been ground into a powdery consistency. It is flour that provides the primary structure to the final baked bread. Commonly available flours are made from rye, barley, maize, and other grains, but it is wheat flour that is most commonly used for breads. Each of these grains provides the starch and protein necessary for the production of bread.

The quantity of the proteins contained in the flour serve as the best indicator of the quality of the bread dough and the finished bread. While bread can be made from all-purpose wheat flour, for quality bread a specialty bread flour, containing more protein, is recommended.

Wheat flour in addition to its starch contains three water-soluble protein groups, albumin, globulin, proteoses, and two non-water soluble protein groups, glutenin and gliadin. When flour is mixed with water the water-soluble proteins dissolve, leaving the glutenin and gliadin to form the structure of the resulting dough. When worked by kneading, the glutenin forms strands of long thin chainlike molecules while the shorter gliadin forms bridges between the strands of glutenin. The resulting networks of strands produced by these two proteins are known as gluten. Gluten development improves if the dough is allowed to autolyse.

Liquids

Water, or some other liquid, is used to form the flour into a paste or dough. The volume of liquid required varies between recipes, but a ratio of 1 part liquid to 3 parts flour is common for yeast breads while recipes that use steam as the primary leavening method may have a liquid content in excess of one part liquid to one part flour by volume. In addition to water, other types of liquids that may be used include dairy products, fruit juices, or beer. In addition to the water in each of these they also bring additional sweeteners, fats, and/or leavening components.

Leavening

Leavening is the process of adding gas to a dough before or during baking to produce a lighter, more easily chewed bread. Most bread consumed in the West is leavened. However, unleavened breads have symbolic importance in Judaism and Christianity. Jews consume unleavened bread called Matza during Passover. They are also used in the Roman Catholic Christian liturgy when they celebrate the Eucharist, a rite derived from the narrative of the Last Supper when Jesus broke bread with his disciples during a Passover Seder. On the other hand, the Orthodox Church always uses leavened bread.

Chemical leavening

A simple technique for leavening bread is the use of gas-producing chemicals. There are two common methods. The first is to use baking powder or a self-rising flour that includes baking powder. The second is to have an acidic ingredient such as buttermilk and add baking soda. The reaction of the acid with the soda produces gas.

Chemically-leavened breads are called *quick breads* and soda breads. This technique is commonly used to make muffins, pancakes, American-style biscuits and sweet breads such as banana bread.

Yeast leavening



Dough before first rising.



Dough after first rising.



Dough after *proving* in tin, ready to bake.

Many breads are leavened by yeast. The yeast used for leavening bread is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, the same species used for brewing alcoholic beverages. This yeast ferments carbohydrates in the flour, including any sugar, producing carbon dioxide. Most bakers in the U.S. leaven their dough with commercially produced baker's yeast. Baker's yeast has the advantage of producing uniform, quick, and reliable results, because it is obtained from a pure culture. Many artisan bakers produce their own yeast by preparing a 'growth culture' which they then use in the making of bread. This culture kept in the right conditions will continue to grow and provide leavening for many years.

Both the baker's yeast and the sourdough method of baking bread follow the same pattern. Water is mixed with flour, salt and the leavening agent (baker's yeast or sourdough starter). Other additions (spices, herbs, fats, seeds, fruit, etc.) are not necessary to bake bread, but often used. The mixed dough is then allowed to rise one or more times (a longer rising time results in more flavor, so bakers often *punch down* the dough and let it rise again), then loaves are formed and (after an optional final rising time) the bread is baked in an oven.

Many breads are made from a *straight dough*, which means that all of the ingredients are combined in one step, and the dough baked after the rising time. Alternatively, dough can be made using a pre-ferment, when some of the flour, water, and the leavening are combined a day or so ahead of baking, and allowed to ferment overnight. On the day of the baking, the rest of the ingredients are added, and the rest of the process is the same as that for straight dough. This produces a more flavorful bread with

better texture. Many bakers see the starter method as a compromise between the highly reliable results of baker's yeast, and the flavor/complexity of a longer fermentation. It also allows the baker to use only a minimal amount of baker's yeast, which was scarce and expensive when it first became available. Most yeasted preferments fall into one of three categories: *poolish* or *pouliche*, a loose-textured mixture composed of roughly equal amounts of flour and water (by weight); *biga* a stiff mixture with a higher proportion of flour; and *pâte fermentée*, which is simply a portion of dough reserved from a previous batch. Sourdough (also known as *levain* or "natural leaven") takes it a step further, creating a pre-ferment with flour and water that propagates naturally occurring yeast and bacteria (usually *Saccharomyces exiguus*, which is more acid-tolerant than *S. cerevisiae*, and various species of *Lactobacillus*.)

Sourdough

Main article: [Sourdough](#)



Sourdough loaves

The sour taste of sourdoughs actually comes not from the yeast, but from a lactobacillus, with which the yeast lives in symbiosis. The lactobacillus feeds on the byproducts of the yeast fermentation, and in turn makes the culture go sour by excreting lactic acid, which protects it from spoiling (since most microbes are unable to survive in an acid environment). All yeast-leavened breads used to be sourdoughs, and the leavening process was not understood until the 19th century, when with the advance of microscopes, scientists were able to discover the microbes that make the dough rise. Since then, strains of yeast have been selected and cultured mainly for reliability and quickness of fermentation. Billions of cells of these strains are then packaged and marketed as "Baker's Yeast". Bread made with baker's yeast is not sour because of the absence of the lactobacillus. Bakers around the world quickly embraced baker's yeast for it made baking simple and so allowed for more flexibility in the bakery's operations. It made baking quick as well, allowing bakeries to make fresh bread from scratch as often as three times a day. While European bakeries kept producing sourdough breads, in the U.S., sourdough baking was widely replaced by baker's yeast, and only recently has that country (or parts of it, at least) seen the rebirth of sour-vinegar dough in artisan bakeries. According to Alton Brown, host of Food Network's "Good Eats" television show, each region of the world has different strains of lactobacillus, hence the flavor of the bread made from home starters is unique. The San Francisco Bay Area is especially famous for its sourdough breads.

Sourdough breads are most often made with a *sourdough starter* (not to be confused with the starter method discussed above). A sourdough starter is a culture of yeast and lactobacillus. It is essentially a dough-like or pancake-like flour/water mixture in which the yeast and lactobacilli live. A starter can be maintained indefinitely by periodically discarding a part of it and *refreshing* it by adding fresh flour and water. (When refrigerated, a starter can go weeks without needing to be *fed*.) There are starters owned by bakeries and families that are several human generations old, much revered for creating a special taste or texture. Starters can be obtained by taking a piece of another starter and growing it, or they can be made from scratch. There are hobbyist groups on the

web who will send their starter for a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and there are even mailorder companies that sell different starters from all over the world. An acquired starter has the advantage to be more proven and *established* (stable and reliable, resisting spoiling and behaving predictably) than from-scratch starters.

There are other ways of sourdough baking and culture maintenance. A more traditional one is the process that was followed by peasant families throughout Europe in past centuries. The family (usually the woman was in charge of breadmaking) would bake on a fixed schedule, perhaps once a week. The starter was saved from the previous week's dough. The starter was mixed with the new ingredients, the dough was left to rise, then a piece of it was saved (to be the starter for next week's bread). The rest was formed into loaves which were marked with the family sign (this is where today's decorative *slashing* of bread loaves originates from), and taken to the communal oven to bake. These communal ovens over time evolved into what are known today as bakeries, when certain people specialized in bread baking, and with time enhanced the process so far as to be able to mass produce cheap bread for everyone in the world.

Steam leavening

The rapid expansion of steam produced during baking leavens the bread, which is as simple as it is unpredictable. The best known steam-leavened bread is the popover. Steam-leavening is unpredictable since the steam is not produced until the bread is baked.

Steam leavening happens regardless of the rising agents (baking soda, yeast, baking powder, sour dough, beaten egg whites, etc.)

- The leavening agent either contains air bubbles or generates carbon dioxide.
- The heat vaporises the water from the inner surface of the bubbles within the dough.
- The steam expands and makes the bread rise.

It is actually the main factor in the rise of bread once it has been put in the oven. CO₂ generation, on its own, is too small to account for the rise. Heat kills bacteria or yeast at an early stage, so the CO₂ generation is stopped.

Bacterial leavening

Salt rising bread employs a form of bacterial leavening that does not require yeast. Although the leavening action is not always consistent, and requires close attention to the incubating conditions, this bread is making a comeback due to its unique cheese-like flavor and fine texture. [1].

Aeration

Aerated bread is leavened by carbon dioxide being forced into dough under pressure. The technique is no longer in common use, but from the mid 19th to 20th centuries bread made this way was somewhat popular in the United Kingdom, made by the Aerated Bread Company and sold in its high-street tea rooms.

Fats or shortenings

Fats such as butter, vegetable oils, lard, or that contained in eggs affects the development of gluten in breads by coating and lubricating the individual strands of protein and also helping hold the structure together. If too much fat is included in a bread dough, the lubrication effect will cause the protein structures to divide. A fat content of approximately 3% by weight is the concentration that will produce the greatest leavening action. In addition to their effects on leavening, fats also serve to tenderize the breads they are used in and also help to keep the bread fresh longer after baking.

Bread improvers

Main article: [Bread improver](#)

[Bread improvers](#) are frequently used in the production of commercial breads to reduce the time that the bread takes to rise, and to improve the texture and volume of bread. Chemical substances commonly used as bread improvers include [ascorbic acid](#), [hydrochloride](#), [sodium metabisulfate](#), [ammonium chloride](#), various [phosphates](#), [amylase](#), and [protease](#).

Breads across different cultures

There are many variations on the basic recipe of bread, including [pizza](#), [chapatis](#), [tortillas](#), [baguettes](#), [brioche](#), [pitas](#), [lavash](#), [biscuits](#), [pretzels](#), [naan](#), [bagels](#), [puris](#), and many other variations.

- In [Mexico](#) bread is called *pan*. Although corn [tortillas](#) are the staple bread in most of Mexico, breadrolls in many varieties are an important daily food for city dwellers. Popular breads in Mexico include the [bolillo](#) roll and *pan dulce*. *Pan dulce*, which is Spanish for "sweet bread", is primarily eaten at breakfast.
- In [Peru](#), *pan* has many variations due to the diversity of Peruvian cuisine. People usually eat *Pan de piso*, and *Pan serrano*. There are also some kind of bread made by potatoes, currently popular in the Andes. *Biscochos* are sweet bread usually eaten with some butter and [hot chocolate](#). A dough made with cooked pumpkin or squash, often shaped and fried into doughnuts and served with a sweet fruity dipping sauce, is a traditional favorite.
- In [Spain](#) bread is also called *pan*, and there are many varieties, about 315. There is a region called Tierra del Pan (literally translated as "Land of the Bread"), located in the province of [Zamora](#), where economy was in the past joined to this activity.
- In the [Philippines](#), *pandesal* (or *pan de sal*; literally, salt bread) is a rounded bread usually eaten by Filipinos during breakfast.
- [Germany](#) prides itself on having the largest variety of breads worldwide. More than 300-500 basic kinds of bread come together with more than 1,000 types of small bread-rolls and pastries. It has been estimated that the basic kinds of bread are so widely varied by more than 16,000 local bakeries that more than 1,000 different breads have been presented at a 2005 Cologne bread show. ^[12]Germans are worldwide the biggest consumers (per capita) of bread followed by [Chile](#) ^[2]
- [Finland](#) and [Russia](#) both have dark, sourdough breads made of rye. Traditional Finnish rye bread is disc-shaped, with a hole in the center for easier storing. These breads have a rougher composition and a stronger taste than wheat bread, and can thus be stored for longer periods of time. Some families may still have leaven they use for baking these bread handed down from generation to the next.
- In [Britain](#) there is a wide variety of traditional bread, often baked in a rectangular tin.
- In the [United States](#), the most popular bread has traditionally been soft-textured, usually made with milk and slightly sweet, with a thin crust; this is the type that is generally sold ready-sliced in packages. It is usually eaten with the crust, but some eaters or preparers may remove the crust due to a personal preference or style of serving, as for [afternoon tea](#). Some of the softest bread including [Wonder Bread](#), is referred to as "balloon bread". Though white "sandwich bread" is the most popular, Americans are trending towards more [whole grain](#) and [artisanal](#) breads. Different regions of the country feature native bread varieties including scali (an Italian-style bread made in [New England](#)), [Native American frybread](#) (a product of hardship, developed during the Indian resettlements of the 19th century), and Jewish rye, a bread commonly associated with [delicatessen](#) cuisine. In addition, many foreign styles of bread, particularly the French [baguette](#), the Ashkenazi Jewish [bagel](#), Italian [ciabatta](#), and the Middle Eastern [pita](#)

bread, have become naturalized in the United States. The San Francisco Bay Area is world-famous for its crusty sourdough. In the South and Midland (chiefly), spoon bread, also called batter bread or egg bread, is made of cornmeal with or without added rice and hominy, and mixed with milk, eggs, shortening and leavening to such a consistency that it must be served from the baking dish with a spoon.

- In South Asia (India, Pakistan, etc.), Roti or Chapati, types of flat breads, are commonly used. A variant uses mustard flour rather than white flour. Another variant is Puri, a thin flat bread which is fried rather than baked and puffs up while cooked. Paratha is another variation on Roti. Naan, however, is baked in a Tandoor or clay oven and is rarely prepared at home. White and brown breads are also very common, but not as much as Roti.
- Jews have traditionally baked challah, a type of egg bread with a thin, hard crust and a soft, well-leavened center. It is made by wrapping plaits of dough and then lightly baking them in an oven. Challah is sometimes sweetened using honey and sometimes includes raisins. During Passover, unleavened bread in the form of various types of matzo is required due to the Biblical injunction to avoid any form of leaven during this time of year. There is some debate within the Jewish community as to whether dairy products are allowed in kosher bread; some authorities maintain that bread must be strictly pareve to avoid combining meat and dairy in the same meal, while others feel it is acceptable as long as a sign of some sort (usually a different loaf shape, but others are known) is baked into the loaf to distinguish it from pareve bread.
- In Morocco and West North Africa, a round bread which is roughly four inches tall is used to eat most of the Mediterranean's watery cuisine. They also have a thick and chewy fried bread which is smothered in oil before hand. The Rghifa bread is a staple in Morocco's food and consists of several layers of lightly cooked bread.
- In Scotland, another form of bread called plain bread is also consumed. Plain bread loaves are noticeably taller and thinner, with burned crusts at only the top and bottom of the loaf. Plain bread has a much firmer texture than English and American pan bread. Plain Bread is becoming less common as the bread consumed elsewhere in Britain is becoming more popular with consumers.
- In France, pan bread is known as pain de mie and is used only for toast or for making stuffing; standard bread (in the form of baguettes or thicker breads) has a thick crust and often has large bubbles of air inside. It is often baked three times daily and is sold totally unwrapped to keep the crust crisp. Some fancy breads contain walnuts, or are encrusted with poppy seeds.
- Italy sports many different kinds of bread with its wide geographic variety and its long history of political division contributing to the development of widely different breadmaking recipes and traditions. As a rule of thumb, breadrolls are typical of the northern regions while large loaves are typical of the southern regions. Bread often has a small quantity of olive oil, butter or rendered lard mixed into the dough to make it softer and more palatable. Traditional rustic breads include Sfilatino Imbottito (a stuffed bread roll) and Pizza Bianca (a flat white bread).[3]
- Focaccia is quite popular in Italy, and is known in Provence as fougasse or as fouace in parts of southern France, the former name is becoming increasingly common and fougasse can now be bought all over France. It is usually seasoned with olive oil and herbs, and often either topped with cheese or stuffed with meat or vegetables. Focaccia doughs are similar in style and texture to pizza doughs.
- Stottie cake is a thick, flat, round loaf. Stotties are common in the North East of England. Although it is called a cake, it is a type of bread.
- Being the simplest, cheapest and most basic type of food, bread is often referred as a metaphor for "food" in general, in some languages and dialects, such as Greek.

- Christian traditional societies (usually in poor communities), used to respect bread since Jesus symbolised his body with it. The sign of the cross was performed with the knife on the bread's surface, before the loaf was cut. Sometimes it was considered a sin to desecrate bread (e.g., throw it away).^[original research?]
- In China the traditional Chinese bread is Mantou, a white flour dough that is mostly eaten in Northern China. Can be eaten deep fried or having meat or lotus ingredients inside them (like Char Siu Bao). The traditional staple food of Southern China is rice, and older or more conservative southern Chinese consider rice to be the most essential element of a meal. Meals made of bread, such as a sandwich, are seen by older people as mere snacks no matter how substantial.
- In Ireland, it is traditionally held that the end of a loaf of bread (the 'heel' or 'hilt' of the loaf) is the best part of the loaf. Other stories and myths surround this piece of the bread in Irish Mythology. Irish soda bread, developed to make the most of the soft wheat grown in Ireland, is unusual for a European bread in that it is a quick bread, using the reaction of buttermilk and baking soda rather than yeast to rise.
 - There are different types of traditional 'cheese breads' in many countries, including Brazil, Colombia, Italy and Russia.

Types of bread

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| ▪ <u>Beer bread</u> | ▪ <u>Cottage loaf</u> | ▪ <u>Pita</u> |
| ▪ <u>Biscuit</u> | ▪ <u>Damper</u> | ▪ <u>Portuguese sweet bread</u> |
| ▪ <u>Bread roll</u> | ▪ <u>Flatbread</u> | ▪ <u>Potato bread</u> |
| ▪ <u>Brioche</u> | ▪ <u>Focaccia</u> | ▪ <u>Pumpernickel</u> |
| ▪ <u>Broa</u> | ▪ <u>Indian bread</u> | ▪ <u>Puri</u> |
| ▪ <u>Bun</u> | ▪ <u>Lavash</u> | ▪ <u>Roti</u> |
| ▪ <u>Bush bread</u> | ▪ <u>Matzo</u> | ▪ <u>Rye bread</u> |
| ▪ <u>Canadian White</u> | ▪ <u>Mantou</u> | ▪ <u>Texas toast</u> |
| ▪ <u>Cardamom bread</u> | ▪ <u>Melonpan</u> | ▪ <u>Tiger bread</u> |
| ▪ <u>Challah</u> | ▪ <u>Naan</u> | ▪ <u>Tortilla</u> |
| ▪ <u>Chapati</u> | ▪ <u>Pandoro</u> | ▪ <u>White bread</u> |
| ▪ <u>Cornbread</u> | ▪ <u>Paratha</u> | ▪ <u>Zopf</u> |

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