

## Irish Soda Bread Recipe, from Clare O'Hare

### Ingredients:

- 12 ounces plain (all purpose) Flour (preferably unbleached)
- Salt
- 3/4 - 1 tsp Bread Soda
- Half imperial pint buttermilk (about 1 and a quarter cups) (soured milk can be used but results are not as good, alternatively dilute yoghurt with milk or water )

### Equipment Needed:

- 1 or 2 mixing bowls
- Heavy based or cast iron pan
- Spoon

### Method:

1. Measure out the flour in cups / 4oz multiples, the number is not important. I suggest starting with 2 and then adjusting as necessary for the quantity of bread required when comfortable with the technique.

2. Add baking soda to flour. A full teaspoon makes the bread a little too thick so err closer to 3/4 teaspoon.

The end result of the bread should be soft and slightly chewy. If it is crumbly there is too much soda in the mix.

Add salt to taste to the flour and soda. 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoons or to taste.

Combine the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl, then add buttermilk mix to form a wet dough, roughly the consistency of cold porridge (oats). It only takes a minute or two to do this with a spoon not a mixer.

3. Pre-heat the frying pan (dry) to medium heat. For me this is level 3 on a 5 level electric hob. On gas it is typically 1/2 of full flame. The correct temperature can be gauged by sprinkling some flour on the pan, it should take about 15 seconds to brown.

4. Turn the dough onto a slightly floured surface and knead for a few seconds. Divide the dough into two balls and roll the first out to about 1/2 inch thick. Cut into four parts. (Once the dough is cooking, repeat with the second ball of dough.)

5. Sprinkle some flour on the pan, enough to lightly coat the bottom. Sprinkle some more flour on the top.

6. Cook for about 8 minutes on each side, then test with a knife or skewer to see if it is cooked though, it should come away clean, but possibly damp.

### Notes:

- Do not turn from the first side for the first 8 minutes even if it appears to be burning. The flour may burn a little if the heat is too high but it will prevent the bread from burning and can be brushed off afterwards. If this happens reduce the heat slightly and add a bit more flour to the bottom of the pan when turning the bread after 8 minutes.
- When cooked, wrap in a clean teatowel or similar cloth so that the bread cools slowly otherwise it will form a crust rather than a skin which is what this bread should have.
- You can also bake either type as a loaf in the oven at 350F for 30 minutes on a baking tray or 40 min in a tin.