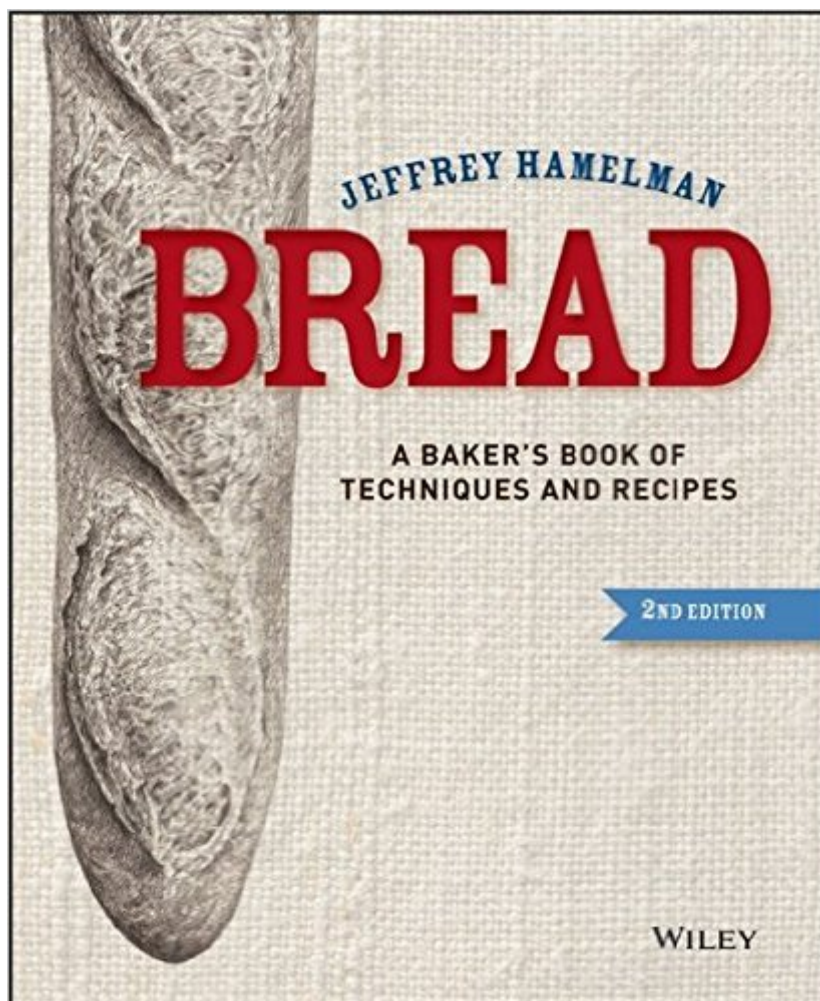


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# Bread: A Baker's Book Of Techniques And Recipes



## Synopsis

An updated new edition of the essential resource for professionals and seasoned home bakers. Hailed as a "revelation" when it first appeared in 2004, Jeffrey Hamelman's *Bread* is a legendary resource praised by baking luminaries from around the world. Explaining complex techniques with simple and helpful illustrations, the book includes recipes for a vast array of breads, including sourdoughs, brioche, authentic rye breads, flat breads, French breads, and much more. Features nearly 150 detailed, step-by-step recipes, along with vivid drawings and photographs showing techniques and finished products. Written by Jeffrey Hamelman, one of fewer than 200 Certified Master Bakers in the United States and a recipient of the Golden Baguette Award (2005), the highest honor bestowed by the Bread Baker's Guild of America. Fully updated to include the latest techniques, methods, trends, and bread varieties. Whether you're an aspiring or practicing professional baker or a dedicated home hobbyist, *Bread* is the ultimate resource for almost any variety of bread you can imagine.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (111 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

As an experienced home baker, this is the only book I've chosen to buy. I absolutely wouldn't say it's the be-all-and-end-all of baking; it's no "bread bible". But for the types of European breads I happen to like, it's the perfect book. There are no gimmicks here. Hamelman doesn't have some new method with each book (like Reinhart), he doesn't hold your hand (like Barenbaum). Just good core formulas and practical baking techniques. The critics are all correct when they note: the mixing times are for professional bakers and you have to double them for home; the moisture content can

be off at home; the flour protein is not specified; you have to scale down for home use with a calculator; general hints are hidden in obscure places rather than highlighted for general use. He also leaves out many hand-holding steps he assumes you know. In other words, you pretty much have to make each of his recipes your own. That alone is why I can't recommend this book to the average home baker, especially a beginner. (Berenbaum's Bread Bible much better for beginner's.) But for the experienced home baker who already knows their way around dough feel, knows how to adjust hydration, salt, and yeast and sourdough fermentation times, this book is rock solid. Many classic formulas here, and once you get his thinking you can extrapolate many more. Most of the people I know who love this book end up adapting the recipes to their own tastes. In other words, Hamelman gives you an excellent starting point for many classic European breads. That is why I bought it. I have tons of recipes on my hard drive, but for a paper volume this was it. It's important to note Hamelman's training and tastes lean heavily toward German breads.

The other day, I read a review on another website which concluded that the reviewers who criticized the first edition were largely inexperienced home bakers incapable of appreciating recipes by a certified master baker. Thus, I trust prospective customers will realize the necessity for sufficient critique. Commercial bakers are the primary audience of this book, although there has been an attempt to enlarge its scope to include home bakers. I purchased the first edition in 2010 through , and my review of the first edition is still extant. I'd been baking for about ten years at the time of my first purchase, and I wanted to take my ability to a new level. Because there are some important omissions in the first edition, I later purchased the second edition hoping that I would find it improved. Let's begin with the first oversight: flour protein level. Early in the book, Hamelman writes, "When working with any bread formula, it is important to know what kind of flour is used, and its protein level. When making substitutions or when trying out new flours, adjustments in hydration are very often necessary" (p. 34). That sounds good enough, except by the time the recipes begin in chapter 4 (about 90 pages into the book), he has not ever stated what to use. So, the home baker wants to jump in and make some recipes--and they have to guess. I love the clarity with which Nancy Silverton writes in her section on white flour, "The white flour I use at the moment is blended from hard winter wheat and dark hard northern spring wheat, and has a protein content of 12.5 percent" (Breads from the La Brea Baker, p. 6). Rose Levy Beranbaum even provides the "Approximate Range of Protein in Nationally Available Flours" on p.

First thing: I took a pass on this book when it first came out. I was on a baking book kick at the time

('03-'04) and figured that it would be redundant with the The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion, a great book in its own right, so I'm coming at this with more or less fresh eyes and no experience with the first edition. First off... any of the reviews you've read that say that this is a must read? Yes, yes it is. Hamelman is about on the same level as Peter Reinhart for expertise, and barely half a step below the great Raymond Calvel, so you know this is going to be good. Recipes come in both home and commercial quantity; although metric measurements are only available for the commercial sizes, the presence of baker's percentage makes up for it handily. There is a respectably large amount of technical material, including an entire chapter on braiding dough (apparently whole books exist on that one subject). Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, there isn't as much discussion of ingredients as you'd expect; it's there, but Hamelman is more focused on technique and baking science and integrates ingredient discussions into the flow of the book rather than setting them off in one reference section. (There's an extensive bibliography, so you at least know where to go to find the information he doesn't give.

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