- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Rising Time: 60-75 minutes
- Baking Time: 25-30 minutes
- Total Time: Approximately 1 hour 45 minutes to 2 hours
- Yield: One 6-inch round loaf (approximately 8 slices)
- Difficulty Level: Beginner-friendly
- Equipment Needed: Air fryer with a 6-7 inch baking pan or air fryer-safe loaf pan

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Ingredients

For the Dough:

- 2 ¼ cups (280g) all-purpose flour or bread flour
- 1 teaspoon (4g) active dry yeast or instant yeast
- 1 teaspoon (6g) fine sea salt
- 1 tablespoon (12g) granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon (14g) unsalted butter, softened (or olive oil)
- ¾ cup (180ml) warm water (110°F/43°C)

For the Top:

- 1 tablespoon milk (for brushing)
- Optional: sesame seeds, oats, or herbs for topping

Step-by-Step Instructions

Phase 1: Preparation (5 minutes)

Step 1: Remove the air fryer basket and preheat the air fryer to 350°F (175°C) for 3-5 minutes. This ensures even heat distribution from the start.

Step 2: Lightly grease your baking pan with butter or cooking spray. If using parchment paper, cut a circle to fit the bottom of your pan.

Step 3: Measure all ingredients accurately. For best results, spoon flour into your measuring cup and level it off with a knife rather than scooping directly from the bag.

Phase 2: Making the Dough (10 minutes)

Step 4: In a large mixing bowl, combine the warm water and sugar. Stir until the sugar dissolves. The water should feel warm to the touch but not hot—approximately 110°F (43°C). If it’s too hot, it will kill the yeast; if too cold, the yeast won’t activate properly.

Step 5: Sprinkle the yeast over the water mixture and let it sit for 5 minutes until foamy. This “proofing” step confirms your yeast is alive and active.

Step 6: Add the flour, salt, and softened butter to the yeast mixture. Stir with a wooden spoon or spatula until a shaggy dough forms.

Step 7: Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes by hand, or use a stand mixer with a dough hook for 5-6 minutes on medium speed. The dough should become smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky but not sticky. To test: poke the dough—it should spring back slowly.

Phase 3: First Rise (45-60 minutes)

Step 8: Shape the dough into a ball and place it in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap.

Step 9: Let the dough rise in a warm, draft-free place for 45-60 minutes, or until doubled in size. Intensity note: The rising time depends on ambient temperature. In a warm kitchen (75-80°F), expect 45 minutes. In cooler conditions, allow up to 75 minutes. You can create a warm environment by placing the bowl in an unheated oven with the light on or near a warm (but not hot) appliance.

Step 10: Test the dough by gently pressing a floured finger into it. If the indentation remains, the dough is ready. If it springs back immediately, it needs more time.

Phase 4: Shaping and Second Rise (15-20 minutes)

Step 11: Punch down the dough gently to release air bubbles. Turn it onto a lightly floured surface.

Step 12: Shape the dough into a smooth ball by pulling the edges toward the center and pinching them together at the bottom. Place seam-side down in your prepared baking pan.

Step 13: Cover loosely and let rise for another 15-20 minutes while your air fryer preheats.

Phase 5: Baking (25-30 minutes)

Step 14: Preheat the air fryer to 350°F (175°C) for 5 minutes.

Step 15: Brush the top of the loaf gently with milk and add any desired toppings.

Step 16: Baking intensity guidelines:

- First 15 minutes: Bake at 350°F (175°C) with the pan on the middle rack position.

- Check at 15 minutes: The loaf should be rising nicely and developing color. If browning too quickly, tent loosely with foil.

- Final 10-15 minutes: Continue baking until the internal temperature reaches 190-200°F (88-93°C) when tested with a meat thermometer, or until the loaf sounds hollow when tapped on the bottom.

Step 17: Remove the bread from the air fryer and immediately transfer to a wire cooling rack. Critical: Let it cool for at least 30 minutes before slicing. Cutting hot bread can cause it to become gummy inside.

Nutrition Information

Per slice (based on 8 slices per loaf):

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	165 kcal
Total Fat	2.5g
Saturated Fat	1.2g
Cholesterol	5mg
Sodium	295mg
Total Carbohydrates	30g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Total Sugars	2g
Protein	4g