Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 6–8 minutes
Total Time: 11–13 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Ingredients
- Equipment
- Instructions
  - Step 1: Preheat the Air Fryer (Time: 3 minutes | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 2: Prepare the Bagels (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 3: Add the Sauce (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 4: Add the Cheese and Toppings (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 5: First Air Fry (Time: 4 minutes | Intensity: Medium)
  - Step 6: Check and Adjust (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 7: Second Air Fry for Golden Finish (Time: 2–3 minutes | Intensity: Medium-High)
  - Step 8: Rest and Garnish (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)
  - Step 9: Serve (Time: Immediate | Intensity: Low)
- Time & Intensity Summary
- Tips for Perfect Pizza Bagels
- Variations
- Storage & Reheating
- Nutrition Information (Per Serving — 2 Bagel Halves)

Introduction

Air Fryer Pizza Bagels are the ultimate quick-fix comfort food — crispy, cheesy, and ready in under 15 minutes. Whether you're feeding hungry kids after school, need a fast lunch, or want a fun appetizer for game day, this recipe delivers big flavor with minimal effort. The air fryer gives the bagels a golden, toasted crunch on the outside while melting the cheese to bubbly perfection on top, all without heating up your oven.

This recipe is endlessly customizable — use your favorite pizza sauce, swap in different cheeses, or pile on toppings like pepperoni, olives, or bell peppers. It's also a great way to use up leftover bagels. Let's get started!

Ingredients

For the Pizza Bagels:

- 2 plain bagels (or everything bagels), sliced in half horizontally
- ½ cup pizza sauce (or marinara sauce)
- 1½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano

- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (for brushing)
- Optional toppings: 20 slices pepperoni, sliced black olives, diced bell peppers, sliced mushrooms, or fresh basil leaves

For Garnish (optional):

- Crushed red pepper flakes
- Fresh basil, chopped
- Extra Parmesan for sprinkling

Equipment

- Air fryer (any size; if using a small model, cook in batches)
- Pastry brush
- Spoon for sauce

- Cutting board and knife
- Tongs or spatula

Instructions

Step 1: Preheat the Air Fryer (Time: 3 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Preheat your air fryer to 375°F (190°C) for about 3 minutes. Preheating ensures even cooking and a crispy bottom. If your air fryer doesn’t have a preheat function, simply run it empty at 375°F for 3 minutes.

Step 2: Prepare the Bagels (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Slice the bagels in half horizontally using a serrated knife. Lightly brush the cut sides with olive oil — this helps them toast beautifully and prevents sogginess. Place the bagel halves cut-side up on a clean work surface.

Step 3: Add the Sauce (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)

Spread about 1 tablespoon of pizza sauce evenly over each bagel half, leaving a small border around the edges. Don’t over-sauce — too much moisture can make the bagels soggy. Sprinkle a pinch of garlic powder and oregano over the sauce for extra flavor.

Step 4: Add the Cheese and Toppings (Time: 2 minutes | Intensity: Low)

Top each bagel half with a generous layer of shredded mozzarella (about 3 tablespoons per half), followed by a sprinkle of Parmesan. Add your optional toppings now — pepperoni,

olives, peppers, or mushrooms. Keep toppings light so the cheese can melt evenly.

Step 5: First Air Fry (Time: 4 minutes | Intensity: Medium)

Carefully place the bagel halves in the air fryer basket in a single layer, cheese-side up. Do not overcrowd — cook in batches if needed. Air fry at 375°F (190°C) for 4 minutes. This stage toasts the bagel base and begins melting the cheese.

Step 6: Check and Adjust (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)

Open the basket and check the progress. The cheese should be melted but not yet browned. If the bagels are browning too quickly on top, lower the temperature to 350°F (175°C) for the remaining time.

Step 7: Second Air Fry for Golden Finish (Time: 2–3 minutes | Intensity: Medium-High)

Continue air frying at 375°F (190°C) for another 2–3 minutes, until the cheese is bubbly and golden brown and the bagel edges are crisp. Watch closely during this stage — cheese can go from perfect to burnt quickly.

Step 8: Rest and Garnish (Time: 1 minute | Intensity: Low)

Using tongs, transfer the pizza bagels to a plate. Let them rest for 1 minute (the cheese is molten hot!). Garnish with crushed red pepper flakes, fresh basil, and an extra sprinkle of Parmesan if desired.

Step 9: Serve (Time: Immediate | Intensity: Low)

Serve immediately while hot and gooey. These are best enjoyed fresh — the cheese is at its stretchiest and the bagel is at its crispiest right out of the air fryer.

Time & Intensity Summary

Stage	Time	Intensity
Preheat air fryer	3 min	Low
Prepare bagels	2 min	Low
Add sauce	1 min	Low
Add cheese & toppings	2 min	Low
First air fry	4 min	Medium
Check & adjust	1 min	Low
Second air fry	2–3 min	Medium-High
Rest & garnish	1 min	Low
Total	~16–17 min	Easy

Tips for Perfect Pizza Bagels

1. Don’t skip preheating. A hot air fryer means crispy bottoms and evenly melted cheese.

2. Pat toppings dry. Wet ingredients like fresh mushrooms or mozzarella packed in water can make bagels soggy. Pat them dry with a paper towel first.

3. Use stale bagels. Day-old bagels actually work better — they absorb sauce without getting mushy.

4. Cook in batches. Overcrowding steams the bagels instead of crisping them.

5. Watch the cheese. Every air fryer runs differently; check at the 6-minute mark the first time you make this recipe.

Variations

- Meat Lover’s: Add cooked Italian sausage crumbles and pepperoni.
- Veggie Supreme: Top with bell peppers, red onion, olives, and mushrooms.
- Margherita: Use fresh mozzarella slices and finish with fresh basil after cooking.
- BBQ Chicken: Swap pizza sauce for BBQ sauce and add shredded rotisserie chicken.
- Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free bagels and check that your sauce and toppings are certified gluten-free.

Storage & Reheating

- Refrigerator: Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to 3 days.
- Freezer: Freeze assembled, uncooked bagels for up to 2 months. Cook from frozen at

375°F for 8–10 minutes.

- Reheating: Reheat in the air fryer at 350°F for 2–3 minutes — never the microwave, or they’ll turn rubbery.

Nutrition Information (Per Serving — 2 Bagel Halves)

Estimated based on standard ingredients; values vary by brand and toppings.

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	380 kcal
Total Fat	16 g
Saturated Fat	7 g
Cholesterol	35 mg
Sodium	720 mg
Total Carbohydrates	40 g
Dietary Fiber	2 g
Total Sugars	5 g
Protein	18 g
Calcium	320 mg
Iron	2.5 mg