

Prep time: 30 minutes | Rest & rise: 2 hours 45 minutes | Bake time: 22-25 minutes | Total time: ~3 hours 40 minutes

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Ingredients

For the Dough

- 500 g (4 cups) bread flour, plus extra for dusting
- 7 g (2¼ tsp) instant yeast

- 60 g ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) granulated sugar
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp fine sea salt
- 180 ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) whole milk, warmed to 43–46°C (110–115°F)
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 150 g ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) unsalted butter, softened and cut into cubes

For the Egg Wash

- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp whole milk
- Pinch of salt

Optional Finish

- 1 tbsp melted butter, for brushing

- Pearl sugar or flaky sea salt, for sprinkling
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Instructions

Step 1: Activate the Yeast (5 minutes)

Warm the milk to 43–46°C (110–115°F) — it should feel comfortably warm, not hot. Pour it into the bowl of a stand mixer, sprinkle in the yeast and a pinch of the sugar, and stir gently. Let stand 5 minutes until foamy. *If the yeast doesn't foam, it's dead — start over with fresh yeast.*

Step 2: Mix the Dough (10 minutes)

Add the flour, remaining sugar, salt, eggs, and vanilla to the yeast mixture. Fit the mixer with the dough hook and mix on low speed (setting 1–2) for 3–4 minutes until a shaggy dough forms. Scrape down the bowl.

Step 3: Knead and Incorporate Butter (12–15 minutes)

Knead on medium-low speed (setting 3) for 5 minutes until the dough is smooth. With the mixer running, add the softened butter one cube at a time, waiting until each is absorbed before adding the next. This takes about 6–8 minutes. Once all the butter is in, knead on medium speed (setting 4) for 3–4 minutes more, until the dough is glossy, supple, and pulls away from the bowl cleanly. It should pass the windowpane test — stretch a small piece thin enough to see light through it without tearing.

Step 4: First Rise (1 hour 30 minutes)

Shape the dough into a ball and place it in a lightly buttered bowl. Cover with a damp towel or plastic wrap and let rise in a warm spot (24–27°C / 75–80°F) for 1 hour 30 minutes, or until

doubled in size. *For deeper flavor, refrigerate overnight (8–12 hours) instead, then let it come to room temperature for 30 minutes before shaping.*

Step 5: Shape the Rolls (10 minutes)

Butter a 23×33 cm (9×13 inch) baking pan. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface — it will be soft and slightly sticky. Divide into 12 equal pieces (about 80 g each). Roll each into a tight ball by cupping your hand and circling it on the counter. Arrange the balls seam-side down in the pan, evenly spaced in a 3×4 grid.

Step 6: Second Rise (45–60 minutes)

Cover loosely and let rise at room temperature for 45–60 minutes, until the rolls are puffy and nearly touching. They should spring back slowly when gently poked. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F) with a rack in the lower-middle position.

Step 7: Egg Wash and Bake (22–25 minutes)

Whisk the egg, milk, and salt together and brush gently over the risen rolls, avoiding the sides of the pan. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for 22–25 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through, until deep golden brown and hollow-sounding when tapped. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read 88–90°C (190–195°F). *If the tops brown too quickly, tent loosely with foil after 15 minutes.*

Step 8: Cool and Finish (15 minutes)

Brush the hot rolls with melted butter and sprinkle with pearl sugar or flaky salt, if desired. Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Timing & Intensity Summary

Stage	Time	Intensity
Yeast activation	5 min	Low — passive
Mixing	10 min	Low — machine
Kneading + butter	12-15 min	Medium — monitor closely
First rise	1 hr 30 min	None — hands-off
Shaping	10 min	Medium — light touch
Second rise	45-60 min	None — hands-off
Baking	22-25 min	Medium — watch browning
Cooling	15 min	None

Total active time: ~45 minutes | Total elapsed: ~3 hours 40 minutes

Nutrition (per roll, based on 12 rolls)

Estimates calculated without optional pearl sugar topping.

- Calories: 265 kcal
- Total fat: 12 g (saturated: 7 g)
- Cholesterol: 75 mg
- Sodium: 190 mg

- Total carbohydrates: 32 g (sugars: 5 g)
- Dietary fiber: 1 g
- Protein: 6 g