

Pretzels

Recipe by Matthew Amster-Burton, from Hungry Monkey: A Food-Loving Father's Quest to Raise an Adventurous Eater. Used with permission.

TIME: 2 hours, including rising time

YOU'LL NEED: stand mixer

LITTLE FINGERS: After I let Iris help shape pretzels, she invented this game where she curls a rubber band or piece of string into a squiggle and asks, "Would you eat a pretzel shaped like THIS? Yes or no?" Repeat a hundred times. Other than that and the obvious warnings about the electric mixer and the oven, I have no caveats about letting your children help make pretzels.

Makes 6 pretzels

8 ounces all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon instant yeast

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon honey

1/2 cup lukewarm water

cooking spray

2 tablespoons baking soda

kosher or pretzel salt for sprinkling

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, stir together the flour, yeast, and salt. Stir the honey into the water until it begins to dissolve, then add the honey-water mixture to the dry ingredients. Mix with the paddle on low speed until the dough starts to come together, then switch to the dough hook and knead on medium speed (4 on the KitchenAid) for 4 minutes. If the dough is very dry (bits are refusing to incorporate) add an additional tablespoon of water. Spray a bowl with cooking spray and place the dough in it. Spray a bit more cooking spray on top of the dough, cover the bowl with plastic wrap, and let rise 75 minutes, punching down the dough after 45 minutes.
2. Line a large baking sheet with parchment and spray with cooking spray. Divide the dough into 6 pieces (about 2 ounces each). (It will be easier to form the pretzels if you cut the dough into strips with a bench knife rather than pulling off balls of dough by hand.) Roll each piece into a long (18-inch) snake and form into a pretzel. Place the formed pretzels on the baking sheet.
3. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Bring 2 quarts of water and the baking soda to a boil in a saucepan. Add 3 pretzels to the boiling water and boil 30 seconds. Flip the pretzels, boil an additional 30 seconds, and return them to the baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining pretzels. Sprinkle the pretzels with kosher salt or with pretzel salt (available from kingarthurfLOUR.com) if you have it.

4. Bake 9 to 10 minutes or until deep golden brown. Cool pretzels on a rack and serve warm.