5050 Everyday Bread

Makes 1 loaf or 10 rolls

250g (1 cup) strong white flour (more for dusting)
250g (1 cup) strong wholemeal flour
325g (1 1/3 cup) warm water (30°C)
5g (1 .5 tsp) dried yeast
8g (1.5 tsp) salt

Put the flour, yeast and salt into a large bowl and pour in the water. Using one hand or a spoon mix these ingredients to form sticky dough. Oil or wet your work surface and vigorously knead the dough for 5-10 minutes. Add more flour only if the dough is unworkably sticky, and even then only a light dusting. You're aiming for a soft and elastic dough. Place the dough back in the bowl and cover the bowl with a tea towel or plastic bag, and leave in a warm place to rise until doubled in size, which can take one to three hours depending on temperature (the cooler the temperature the slower the rise). Remove from the bowl and gather into a ball ready for shaping.

To make a loaf, oil a 1kg (large) bread tin. Flatten the dough and fold into thirds, before rolling up like a Swiss roll. Tuck the ends under to form a loaf shape and gently place into the tin. Allow the loaf to rise in a warm place for 60-90 minutes. The dough should rise above the top of the tin. Dust the top with a little flour and cut a slash across the loaf from one end to the other. Place this straight away into in a pre-heated oven (220°C/400°F) Bake at this temperature for 10 min then lower to 180°C/360°F and bake for a further 25-30 minutes. Cool before slicing.

To make rolls, roll out the dough to a sausage shape and cut into 10 equal (75g) pieces. To make round rolls, take a portion of dough and using a circular motion with the palm of your hand, gently roll the dough on a floured surface while drawing your fingers upwards to create a ball shape. The ball shape can also be created by rolling the dough between the palms of both hands using the same circular motion. Place each ball on a large oiled tray allowing enough space between them for the rolls to double in size. Dust with flour or brush the tops with milk and sprinkle with sesame or poppy seeds. Allow these to rise in a warm place for 30 minutes or a little longer for lighter rolls and bake in a pre-heated oven (220°C/ 400°F) Bake at this temperature for 10 min then lower to 180°C/360°F and bake for a further 10 minutes and allow the rolls to cool slightly on a rack before cutting.

This recipe is very adaptable. If you want a white loaf just use white flour only. If you want to add in fruit (soak it first) and then add before kneading starts. Want a slightly softer crumb to your loaf, then add a little milk instead of water.