

INGREDIENTS

DOUGH

- 1 cup milk (I recommend whole or 2%)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (1/2 stick)
- 1 0.25 ounce packet active dry yeast (make sure it's not expired!)
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

CINNAMON SUGAR FILLING

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

CREAM CHEESE ICING

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2-4 Tbsp. milk (add 1 tbsp. at a time)

DIRECTIONS:

1. First begin preparing your dough by melting 1/2-stick unsalted butter in a small, microwave-safe bowl in the microwave for 40-45 seconds, or until melted. Pour into a medium size bowl and set aside.
2. Next, heat milk in the same small microwave-safe bowl in the microwave for 45 seconds and pour in the bowl with the melted butter. **Pro tip: To ensure your yeast mixture properly activates, I recommend using a digital thermometer to check that the temperature of the milk/butter is between 100-110 degrees F. If needed you can microwave a little longer until the temperature is reached, or if the liquid is too hot, wait until it has lowered to between 100-110 degrees F before combining with the yeast/sugar.

3. Stir in sugar and a yeast packet until dissolved. Cover with a tea cloth, towel, or plastic wrap and let sit for 10 minutes.
4. While you are waiting for your dough to activate, preheat your oven to the lowest setting (mine is 170 degrees F)
5. After 10 minutes, the yeast mixture should be fully frothy/foamy (see top left photo below for visual). Remove towel and add in 1 egg, salt, and vanilla extract.
6. Next, begin adding in flour in 1/2 cup increments, folding in with a spatula until combined. *If easier, you can use your hands to incorporate the last bit of flour. The dough should be soft and slightly tacky, but not too sticky.
7. Form dough into a round ball in the bowl and cover with a tea cloth. Turn your oven OFF and place covered dough in the warm oven to proof for 10 minutes.
8. While your dough is proofing, begin preparing your cinnamon sugar filling. In a medium size mixing bowl, use an electric mixer to combine softened butter, brown sugar, sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla extract until combined. Set aside.
9. Once dough has proofed for 10 minutes, remove towel and place dough on a large pastry mat or a clean, lightly greased or floured surface to roll out. Use a rolling pin and roll the dough to form a 14" x 18" rectangle and 1/4" thick.
10. Next, begin preheating oven to 350 degrees and use an offset spatula to spread the cinnamon sugar butter mixture on your dough almost to the edges.
11. Starting with the short side towards you, tightly roll vertically away from you to form a log. (see photos in post for reference)
12. Once rolled, use a dough scraper or knife to pre-mark the dough for cutting. First, pre-mark the dough in half, then pre-mark half of those halves, and lastly pre-mark three slices in each section for a total of 12 even cinnamon rolls. Once your slices are pre-marked, use a serrated knife to cut each slice. Use slow, back and forth sawing motions for the cleanest cuts, and make sure you don't press down too hard or the filling will seep out.
13. Next, place cinnamon rolls in a 9x13 baking pan that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Bake in the oven at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until the cinnamon rolls are a light golden brown.
14. Let cool for 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack.
15. While cinnamon rolls are cooling, prepare your cream cheese icing. Use an electric hand mixer to combine softened cream cheese, powdered sugar, vanilla extract, and milk (1 tbs at a time) in a medium size mixing bowl. Whisk until smooth and continue adding milk until desired icing consistency is reached. (Add more milk for a thinner drizzle, and less for a thicker icing)
16. Spread cream cheese icing on warm cinnamon rolls, serve, and enjoy!