

Pizza Tips
From the SV Second Star Galley
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Dough

- Make the dough the night before and let it rise in the refrigerator. Remove dough about an hour before making the pizza.
- The 00 flour seems to make a difference in the texture of the dough and how well it stretches.

Oven

- The oven can't get hot enough. For a conventional oven set the temperature as high as it can go, 500 to 550 degrees.
- Preheat the oven with the pizza stone in it for at least an hour or longer. The longer it preheats the more stable the temperature will be.
- Set the rack as high as it can go and still leave room for the pizza stone and the pizza. This is probably the 2nd or 3rd setting from the top. The highest temperature is at the top of the oven, this will help melt the cheese.

Pizza Peel

- Never wash the peel with water. That's right, never. Water will raise the grain on the wooden peel and the pizza won't slide off as easily.
- To clean the peel, use a bench scraper and just scrap it clean. This will clean the peel and make it smoother, the pizza will slide off more easily.
- Dust the peel with flour and then cornmeal or semolina flour. Cornmeal or Semolina act like ball bearings and help the pizza slide off the peel. I've come to prefer Semolina.
- The pizza will not simply slide off the peel, it takes a subtle jerking motion to get it moving and then it will slide off.
- This YouTube video shows how to get the pizza off the peel: <https://youtu.be/lz-Yr1q-fKM>

General Tips

- Weigh the flour and water. It is more accurate than volume measurements because the flour can be fluffy or compact and that will affect the quality of the dough.
- For the first half dozen pizzas keep them simple, cheese and sauce. It takes some practice to get the pizza to slide off the peel and the peel needs to be broken in. It will be easier with a pizza that weighs less.
- On the first attempt, have a Plan B.

Keep trying and enjoy!