



# Bread – an ingredient instead of wasted food



Tipp von Esther Kern



Stale bread. It's a term used in German to describe something tedious and difficult, and not without good reason. Of course stale bread is no fun if you simply eat it as it is.

But stale bread can open up lots of culinary opportunities if you treat it as an ingredient. Here are a couple of simple tips on how to use it



**Breadcrumbs:** By far the best-known way of making the most of bread is as breadcrumbs. If you have a food processor at home, you can use it to grind up dry pieces of bread very easily. You can even do this without a food processor, with a little preparation. For example, you can make breadcrumbs using a mortar and pestle, but the pieces of dry bread should not be too large. If the bread has already started to dry out, I cut it into cubes, dry them and then grind them in my stone mortar.

**“Formaggio dei poveri”:** In Italy, toasted breadcrumbs are considered to be the poor man’s Parmesan. And they can be used in exactly the same way as Parmesan, for example on pasta or vegetables. You toast the breadcrumbs with a little olive oil and salt, adding some chopped herbs for the last few minutes in the oven.

**Bread salad:** And while we’re in Italy, here’s another inspirational idea from the south for the summer months. Roast some cubes of stale bread with a little oil. Dice a few tomatoes, then mix the bread and tomatoes with a dressing and leave them to soak. Season with fresh basil.

**Dumplings:** Here in Switzerland, we aren’t huge dumpling fans. But they are a great way of using up leftover bread. And while they’re not traditional here, it doesn’t mean we can’t look to our German and Austrian neighbours for tips on how to avoid food waste. So, how about some dumplings then? We asked Freddy Christandl, taste coach, ambassador for Swiss mountain potatoes and top chef with Austrian roots, for a recipe:

### **Classic napkin dumplings**

**Serves 6**

#### **Ingredients**

2 eggs  
200 ml milk  
herb sea salt  
70 g butter  
60 g onions  
250 g dried diced bread  
10 g chopped parsley  
butter for spreading on napkin

#### **Method**

1. Mix together the eggs, milk and herb sea salt.
2. Chop the onion very finely and lightly sauté it in the butter until translucent.
3. Combine the diced bread, egg mix, onion and parsley well and leave to rest for one hour. Spread some melted butter onto a damp fabric napkin (or tea towel).
4. Shape the mixture into a roll approx. 6 cm thick, and roll this up securely in the napkin.
5. Tie the ends and the middle with string and let the dumplings soak in plenty of salted water for approx. 40 minutes.
6. Remove the dumplings from the water, unwrap them from the napkin, cut them into 1 cm thick slices and drizzle them with some melted herb butter.



Of course there are countless other ways of using bread as an ingredient, so be open-minded and give them a go. You'll soon see that stale bread is actually a culinary opportunity!