Croissants
This crescent-shaped, buttery, flaky pastry is perhaps the most well-known in the world. You’ll find it for sale across the globe from Chicago to New York to Paris to Tokyo and from high end pastry shops and restaurants to delis to fast food joints. The widely recognized croissant has several romantic accounts of its origin.

No one knows for certain where the first croissant was baked, but everyone agrees that French bakers mastered the recipe. The story most often referred to places the croissant in the category of viennoiseries – that is, the flaky or “feuilleté” pastry, such as the croissant, which may have originated in Vienna. This legend tells that one night in 1683, the Turks attempted to invade Vienna by tunneling under the city walls. Some bakers beginning their day’s work heard the peculiar noise underground and sounded the alarm preventing the Turks from overtaking the city. To celebrate, the Viennese bakers created a bread in the shape of the Turkish flag’s emblem, a crescent moon. Other sources describe a similar story of a Turkish invasion thwarted by bakers in Budapest in 1686. It is possible that the croissant was popularized in Paris at the Universal Exposition in 1889 with Viennese bakers’ participation; however the flaky croissant we are accustomed to was described in French literature as early as 1853.

For over a century, bakers have been laminating their bread dough with butter in order to obtain a flaky, buttery pastry. The basics of laminated dough are simple: fermentation plus the action of “feuilletage” or laminating the layers of dough with fat. The fat used here is butter and constitutes 25 - 30% of the total weight of the dough, for example: 1,000 grams of dough and 250 to 300 grams of butter for laminating.

During the baking of laminated dough, the water in the dough and butter transforms into steam that will try to escape. The fat provides the dough the necessary strength and protection to withstand the pressure of the steam, and also encourages gluten development. The imprisoned steam causes the dough to inflate between the layers and gives volume to the product.

There are a few keys to making a successful croissant: using cold and pliable butter. The dough and the fat should be as close to the same texture as possible. Three single turns will provide an optimum product for this recipe.
Importance of Scaling

You will notice that our recipes are measured in grams. This is not only the traditional French way of measuring ingredients in pastry and baking but it is also the most common practice among pastry chefs in general. In pastry, you have to be as exact as possible, and measuring in grams allows you to do that even more so than with ounces. For example, if a recipe calls for 4 grams of salt, that is equivalent to even less than one fifth of an ounce! If you don’t already have one, you can find a digital scale in many kitchen supply stores (or office supply stores), and they often measure in grams as well as ounces.
Croissants

Ingredients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>210 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Yeast</td>
<td>25 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Arthur Pastry Flour</td>
<td>135 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Salt</td>
<td>8 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sucrose</td>
<td>55 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plugrâ Butter 82% Fat, soft</td>
<td>60 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Whole Milk</td>
<td>200 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Arthur Pastry Flour</td>
<td>160 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Arthur Bread Flour</td>
<td>420 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plugrâ Butter 82% Fat, for book</td>
<td>460 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Weight</td>
<td>1,733 g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method:

- Create a liquid starter called a poolish. The advantage of the sponge is to obtain a more natural fermentation, which results in a more developed taste. Mix the water with the yeast in a mixing bowl.
- Cover the water and yeast mixture with the first amount of pastry flour and let it ferment until cracks form on the surface of the flour. It is important not to disturb the sponge.
- Mix the salt, sucrose, 60 grams of soft butter, and the milk in a small bowl.
- Then add the rest of the flours and your salt, sucrose, and butter mixture to the poolish.
- Mix with the hook in first gear for 1 minute. Do not over mix.
- Place the dough (Détremppe) in a bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise for about 30 minutes until it doubles in volume in a warm place 24°C/75°F.
- Remove the dough from the proofer and press out the first gasses. Then place it in the cooler until very cold.
- Scale 460 grams of butter, shape it into a rectangle, and place it in the cooler.
• Roll the dough out into a rectangle with the middle being thicker than the edges (approximately the same thickness as the butter). Place the dough in the freezer for approximately 30 minutes before laminating the butter.

• Place the rectangle of softened, but still cold butter on the dough. Fold the dough down over the butter and place it back in the cooler until both are the same temperature.

• Roll the dough into a rectangle and give two single folds. Your dough should be 3 times as long as it is wide when rolling it out.

Note: The key to this procedure is to make sure that the dough and the butter are cold yet still pliable. A butter that is too cold will crack and break in small lumps. A butter that is too soft will promote the lamination of a singular dough.

• Place the dough in the freezer for thirty minutes or refrigerate overnight.

• Roll the dough into a rectangle and give one single fold for a total of three single folds.

• Roll out lengthwise to 1/8 inch until you obtain a rectangle.

• Cut two even strips with a knife. Cut even triangles (each at 50g) out of each strip.

• Stretch each piece slightly prior to rolling the croissant. Place 20 croissants on each sheet pan with the tips towards the center of the pan so they do not burn.

• Egg wash the croissants lightly, but not the edges. Place the croissants in the proof box at 28°C/82.4°F, 85% humidity until they double in volume. Take out and let rest for 15 minutes. Egg wash again.

• Bake at 180°C/356°F for 6-7 minutes (convection oven – vent closed) and for 6-7 minutes (vent open).
Place ingredients in bowl and mix in first gear for one minute.

Roll the dough out into a rectangle. Place the rectangle of softened, but still cold butter on the dough.
Fold the dough down over the butter and place back in the cooler.

Roll the dough into a rectangle and give two single folds.
Close-up of the laminated dough after three turns.
Roll out lengthwise until you obtain a rectangle.

Cut even triangles.
Stretch each piece slightly prior to rolling the croissant.

Lay on sheet pan, 4 rows by 5.
Egg wash the croissants lightly. Place in the proof box. Let rest and egg wash again before baking.

Bake for approximately 6-7 minutes.
About The French Pastry School

The French Pastry School of Kennedy-King College at City Colleges of Chicago is the premier international institution of pastry arts education. Superb instruction, superior equipment, and top quality ingredients enable the co-founders, Chefs Jacquy Pfeiffer and Sébastien Canonne, M.O.F., to uphold an exceptional educational facility for all things sweet and baked. The French Pastry School’s team of award-winning instructors has grown to a faculty of many renowned chefs, including Nicole Bujewski, Patrick Doucet, John Kraus, Sunny Lee, Eric Perez, and Joel Reno; Master Baker, Jonathan Dendauw; United States Master Baker, Jeffrey Hamelman; Master Cake Artist, Nicholas Lodge; World Baking Champion, Pierre Zimmermann; and World Pastry Champions, Patrice Caillot and En-Ming Hsu.

The French Pastry School instructs over one thousand students and pastry professionals in hands-on classes each year and offers three main programs: L’Art de la Pâtisserie, a full-time 24-week pastry and baking certificate program; L’Art du Gâteau, The Professional Cake Baking and Decorating Program, a full-time 16-week certificate program; L’Art de la Boulangerie, an 8-week Artisanal Bread Baking Course; and Continuing Education courses, 3- to 5-day long classes year-round for professionals as well as food enthusiasts. Additionally, the Chef Instructors of The French Pastry School lead demonstrations on the premises and around the country for thousands more pastry professionals and enthusiasts.

The French Pastry School offers you the rare opportunity to learn the art of pastry in an intimate setting, being personally mentored by masters in their field. Your skills will be finely honed through hands-on practice and repeated exposure to the best pastry techniques, tools, and ingredients. Our school is dedicated only to the art of pastry, and it is our goal to be the finest pastry school in the United States, producing the best-prepared professionals entering the industry.

The French Pastry School's programs are approved by the Illinois Community College Board through Kennedy-King College at City Colleges of Chicago. Students in our full-time certificate programs earn from 16 to 24 college credit hours.