

“Knead your dough to develop the gluten” Why? Because everybody says so. They say it makes a better loaf. Everyone except ex-Microsoft Chief Technical Officer **Nathan Myhrvold**, that is. He has spent several years researching bread. In the process, he baked 36,000 loaves, using different techniques and recipes from all over the world. He has published a book about it that we can’t afford<sup>1</sup>. His research reveals that: “you can make great bread without kneading”. Just “mix the bread by hand or with a spoon” until it’s at the “shaggy mass stage... not a finished dough at all”, leave it out on the kitchen counter overnight – and bake. Kneading certainly speeds the bread-making process up but, according to Nathan’s research, that’s the only benefit<sup>2</sup>.

Permission to make bread without kneading the dough was good news for the lazy folks at SLiCK. It works well in a tube cooker. Stewart suggested another shortcut – let the dough prove inside the tube. 300g strong white bread flour, 3g of yeast, half tsp of salt, and 190ml of water was stirred into a dough in mixing bowl with a spoon, then squidged immediately into the oiled/floured cooking tray, and straight into the tube.

The tube was left in the sun briefly to raise it to proving temperature, then put in the shade. After 45 minutes, the dough had risen. No ‘knocking back’ was required. Then the tube was put into the familiar Lowsun Gorilla reflector arrangement, and left for an hour. You can see the result in the picture above. You can find more pictures and information in the post below.



**What could go wrong?** Nothing, so far, but if you put a small container of water in the tube to get a crustier crust, don’t spill it inside the tube, or it’s goodbye to your tube, due to thermal shock – it will shatter into a thousand pieces.. Remember also that there is a heat gradient in an evacuated tube cooker. If you don’t turn the loaf round during the bake, the far end will cook more than the end near the mouth of the tube. This doesn’t show much on a small 300g loaf, so we didn’t bother to turn it.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Modernist-Bread-Art-Science-Cuisine/dp/0982761058>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/4J8PTjhDC9dVNV7TMJZxNyH/ten-things-you-knead-to-know-about-bread>