**Quick Soft Pretzels**

Ingredients:

* 3/4 cups warm water (lukewarm, no need to take temperature)
* 1/2 packet active dry or instant yeast (1 and 1/4 teaspoons)
* 1/2 teaspoon salt
* 1 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar
* 2 – 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour + more for work surface (or mix of whole wheat flour and all-purpose flour)
* 1 large egg, beaten
* coarse sea salt for sprinkling

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or silicone baking mat. Set aside.
2. Dissolve yeast in warm water. Stir with a spoon until fairly mixed, about 1 minute. Some clusters of yeast will remain. Add salt and sugar; stir until fairly combined. Slowly add 1 1/2 cups of flour, 1/2 cup at a time. Mix with a wooden spoon until dough is thick. Add 1/2 cup more flour until the dough is no longer sticky. If it is still sticky, add up to 1/4 cup more. Poke the dough with your finger - if it bounces back, it is ready to knead.
3. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface. Knead the dough for about 3 minutes and shape into a ball. With a sharp knife, cut ball of dough into 1/3 cup sections. This measurement does not have to be exact - use as much or little dough for each pretzel as you wish - the size of the pretzel is completely up to you.
4. Roll the dough into a rope with an even diameter. My ropes were twenty inches long. This measurement will depend how large you want the pretzels. Once you have your long rope, take the ends and draw them together so the dough forms a circle. Twist the ends, then bring them towards yourself and press them down into a pretzel shape. See above for link to visual instructions.
5. **This fifth step is optional:** Whisk 9 cups of water and 1/2 cup baking soda together in a large pot. Bring to a boil. Place a pretzel onto a large slotted spatula and dip into the boiling water for 20-30 seconds. Any more than that and your pretzels will have a metallic taste. The pretzel will float. Lift the pretzel out of the water and allow as much of the excess water to drip off.  Place pretzel onto prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the rest of the pretzels. Read why this is a good option [here](http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/2013/09/16/pumpkin-praline-soft-pretzels/). But again, it's not necessary and I did not do it for these pretzels.
6. In a small bowl, beat the egg and pour into a shallow bowl or pie dish. Brush the shaped pretzel with the egg wash (both sides). Place on baking sheet and sprinkle with salt.
7. Bake for 10 minutes at 425F degrees. Turn the oven to broil and bake for 5 more minutes to brown the tops. Watch closely to avoid burning. I do the 5 minute broil no matter if I do step 5 or not.
8. Allow to cool and enjoy. Serve warm or at room temperature. Pretzels may be stored in an airtight container or zipped top bag for up to 3 days (will lose softness).
9. **Make ahead tip:** Pretzels freeze well, up to 2 months. To reheat, bake frozen pretzels at 350°F for 20 minutes or until warmed through. The prepared pretzel dough can be refrigerated for up to one day or frozen in an airtight container for 2-3 months. Thaw frozen dough in the refrigerator overnight. Refrigerated dough can be shaped into pretzels while still cold, but allow some extra time for the pretzels to puff up before the baking soda bath and baking.

http://sallysbakingaddiction.com/2012/12/25/30-minute-whole-wheat-pretzels/