



A BAKE-KEEPER FREE PRINTABLE

Crumb & Crust Diagnostic Quicksheet

Cut your cooled loaf and match what you see to the closest description below.

WHAT YOU SEE	LIKELY CAUSE	TRY NEXT TIME
Gummy, wet crumb	Underbaked, or cut before cooling	Bake to 205–210°F internal; cool 1–2 hrs before cutting
Dense, tight crumb throughout	Under-proofed, weak starter, or too little bulk time	Let bulk ferment run longer; confirm starter passes the float test first
Blown-out ear / burst on the side	Scored too shallow, or under-proofed with strong oven spring	Score deeper at a 45° angle; proof a bit longer
Pale, soft crust	Oven not hot enough, or uncovered too soon	Preheat longer; keep covered for the full steam phase
Flat, spread-out loaf	Over-proofed, or dough too slack for your shaping	Shorten proof time; shape with more tension
Big irregular tunnels near the crust	Rough shaping trapped air pockets	Degas gently; shape with firmer, even tension

Want the full visual guide? See Reading Your Bread on thebakekeeper.com for more examples.