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Multigrain Molasses Bread

- 1 1/2 Cups whole-wheat flour, plus more as needed
- 1 1/3 Cups unbleached bread flour
- 1 Cup bran flakes cereal, crushed into fine bits
- 1/3 Cup plus 1 tablespoon old-fashioned rolled oats, divided
- 1/4 Cup plus 1 tablespoon yellow or white cornmeal, divided
- 1 1/2 Tsp table salt
- 1 1/2 Tsp instant, quick-rising or bread-machine yeast
- 1 1/2 Cups ice water, plus more as needed
- 1/3 Cup mild molasses, (not blackstrap)
- 3 Tbsp corn oil, canola oil or other flavorless vegetable oil



- 1) Mix dough: Thoroughly stir 1 1/2 cups whole-wheat flour, bread flour, bran cereal, 1/3 cup oats, 1/4 cup cornmeal, salt and yeast in a 4-quart (or larger) bowl. Thoroughly whisk ice water, molasses and oil in a medium bowl. Vigorously stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, scraping down the sides and mixing just until the dough is thoroughly blended. The dough should be moist and a bit sticky, but fairly stiff. If the mixture is too dry, stir in just enough additional ice water to facilitate mixing, but don't overmoisten. If the dough is too wet, stir in just enough whole-wheat flour to stiffen slightly. Lightly coat the top with oil. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap.
- 2) First rise: Let the dough rise at room temperature (about 70°F) for 12 to 18 hours; if convenient, stir once partway through the rise. For convenience (and improved flavor), you may refrigerate the dough for 3 to 12 hours before starting the first rise.
- 3) Second rise: Generously coat a 9-by-5-inch (or similar large) loaf pan with oil. Vigorously stir the dough to deflate it. If it is soft, stir in just enough whole-wheat flour to yield a firm but moist dough (it should be fairly hard to stir). Transfer the dough to the pan. Lightly coat the top with oil. Smooth and press the dough evenly into the pan using a well-oiled rubber spatula or your fingertips. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 tablespoon each oats and cornmeal and pat down. Using well-oiled kitchen shears or a serrated knife, cut three or four 1/2-inch-deep, evenly spaced slashes diagonally in the top of the loaf. Cover the pan with plastic wrap.
- 4) Let rise at warm room temperature until the dough nears the plastic, 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours. (For an accelerated rise, see Tip.)
- 5) 15 minutes before baking: Position a rack in lower third of oven; preheat to 400°F.
- 6) Bake, cool, slice: Reduce oven temperature to 375°. Bake the loaf on the lower rack until the top is lightly browned, 60 to 70 minutes. Continue baking, covering with foil if necessary to prevent overbrowning, until a skewer inserted in the center comes out with just a few crumbs on the tip (or until an instant-read thermometer registers 204-206°), 10 to 15 minutes longer. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 to 15 minutes. Turn the loaf out on the rack and let cool to at least warm before serving. The loaf is good warm but slices best when cool.

Makes 1 Large Loaf