

If it's not the machine, it's the ingredients.

Does the element come on at the end of the cycle to cook the dough? If it does then it is not faulty. An element cannot break during part of the cycle only. If only dough is produced, even on a bake cycle the element needs replacing.

Does the loaf contain flour patches or lumps of butter that have not been mixed in? Have you heard any unusual screeching noises from the bread maker? If so it could be a motor or belt problem?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes and your machine is out of guarantee you need to call our customer support on 0844 844 3899 who can put you in touch with a repair agent in your area. If it is still under guarantee you will need to return it to where you purchased it from.

If the answer to all the above questions is **no** then it is **not a machine related problem**, it is **ingredient** related. Since the bread program on your automatic bread bakery is computerised, the success of your loaf depends on the quantity and **quality** of your ingredients.

You may have seen on the news or in the papers recently that the growing wheat crop was affected before harvest. Sometimes due to bad weather, the crop may not grow with as much gluten forming properties as it would require to produce flour for making excellent breads.

We have been experiencing problems recently with poor gluten content in the flour. We usually find that poorly risen loaves are caused by poor gluten in the flour. Here is a little explanation of the role of gluten in bread making.

The way bread is made is the yeast and sugar work together to make CO2 bubbles. These bubbles are trapped by the gluten. Gluten is the protein in wheat. It makes the structure of the loaf, like lots of elastic bands criss crossing to hold up the loaf. If the gluten content is poor, the loaf will not rise like it should, result in the moisture being distributed through a smaller space. This makes the loaf feel sticky. Also, the bits in granary (or wholemeal) flour act like little sharp pieces cutting across the gluten structure. This too impairs the rise of the loaf.

Are you using granary or wholemeal flour or flour with extra grains or rye in it? A white loaf will always rise better as it has no bran or germ in to affect the rise of the loaf. Is the flour organic? If so the quality of the gluten is entirely dependant on **weather** and soil conditions as the farmer cannot add anything chemical to help or protect the wheat while it is growing.

Which yeast do you use? I would recommend yeast that comes in **sachets**. Usually you get 6 or 8 in a pack. Once the sachet has been **opened** it needs to be **discarded after 48 hours**. We have found that larger packets such as Doves Farm yeast deteriorate after a short while of being opened. Please read your packet instructions for more detail.

We have been running some test using a variety of flour. We have found that flour with poorer gluten content produces a better loaf of bread when using the bake rapid recipe and program. We also had improvements when we added 2 tsp of lemon juice to the water.

Flour that has worked well for us recently is **Morrison's white strong bread flour**, **Hovis premium super strong white** bread flour, **Waitrose Leckford estate** and **Waitrose own organic white and whole wheat strong bread flour**. Some of the super markets own brands have produced better results using the bake rapid recipe and program.

