

Sourdough Bread: 101

Sourdough Starter Recipe



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Day 1

1. If using a digital scale (recommended), weigh an empty wide-mouth mason jar and write the weight in grams. This may be useful if you want to use the same jar rather than get a new jar each day.
2. Add 50 grams (½ cup) of whole rye flour* and 55 grams (¼ cup) of unchlorinated water* to the mason jar; stir, making sure all flour is mixed in.
3. Place a rubber band around the jar, marking the starter's top, indicating rise.
4. Cover loosely and place somewhere warm (70-82 F is best) for 24 hours.



Day 2 and 3

1. Begin feeding the starter once per day.
2. Stir the starter with a spatula.
3. If using a digital scale (recommended), discard enough starter so that 50 grams (¼ cup) remain.
 - If using the same jar, this would be the weight of an empty jar + 50 grams starter.
 - If using a new jar, place the jar on a digital scale and press the tare button before weighing 50 grams of the starter.
4. Add 25 grams (¼ cup) organic, unbleached bread or all-purpose flour, 25 grams (¼ cup) whole rye flour, and 50-55 grams (¼ cup) unchlorinated water to the starter; stir, making sure all flour is mixed in.
5. Place a rubber band around the jar marking the top of the starter, cover loosely, and place somewhere warm (70-82 F is best) for the next 24 hours.

Day 4-7 or longer

1. Begin two feedings per day, 12 hours apart, using the same directions as days two and three above, starting with #2.

* Whole rye or other whole grain flour is great on day one, as wild yeasts love it. However, on day two and beyond, it's best to use 50% rye or whole wheat flour and 50% organic, unbleached bread or all-purpose flour, as these flours provide more readily available food.

* May use spring or filtered water. Tap water is usually treated with chlorine or chloramine, which can kill good bacteria. To dechlorinate tap water, use a water filter or fill a pitcher of water and let it stand overnight. If water is treated with chloramine, it is best to use spring or filtered water.



Sourdough Recipe #1

This recipe is a nutritious option, with half the grains coming from whole grains. It also supports local/regional small grain farmers. This recipe has a 77% hydration rate. It should produce a good oven spring with a slightly open crumb.

Ingredients:

- 300 grams of local whole-grain bread flour.
- 300 grams of organic, unbleached bread flour.
- 12 grams of non-iodized salt (sea salt or kosher salt).
- 462 grams of unchlorinated water (spring or filtered). Do NOT use hot water.
- 120 grams of sourdough starter at its peak.

Procedure:

1. **Autolyse.** In a large bowl, stir flours together. Add water and mix thoroughly using a plastic dough scraper or clean hands. There should be no dry flour in the bottom of the bowl. Cover and let rest at room temperature for at least one hour.
2. **Add a starter and salt.** Use a dough scraper or clean hands to mix it. Cover and let rest for 30 minutes.
3. **Wet fingers with water to prevent sticking.** Do four stretch and folds around the dough, pulling the dough from top to bottom, quarter-turn the bowl, pull again from top to bottom, and repeat two more times. Cover and let the dough rest for 20-30 minutes. Repeat this process 2-3 more times so the dough gets stronger, allowing the dough to rest in between.
4. **Cover and bulk ferment.** Transfer to a container that makes it easier to determine the percent rise; use a large rubber band or dry-erase marker to mark the top of the dough. You may also lightly coat it with cooking spray so the dough will quickly come out of the container. Go by dough temperature and percent rise, not by time. Take the dough's temperature before bulk fermenting and multiple times throughout the process. Take the average when considering what rise to stop at.
 - 30% rise when dough temp is 80 F.
 - 50% rise when dough temp is 75 F.
 - 75% rise when dough temp is 70 F.
 - 100% (double) when dough temp is 65 F.

1. **Turn the dough onto a clean counter.** Divide the dough in half using a bench scraper if making two loaves.

Pre-shape dough:

1. Using a bench scraper, fold one side of the dough onto the center, the opposite side onto the center, the top, and finally, the bottom.
 2. Flip the dough over.
 3. Place the bench scraper beneath the dough and move it around in a circular motion a few times to tighten it into a circular shape.
 4. Let the dough rest for 20-30 minutes.
2. **Final shape dough.** Lightly dust the bottom of the bannetons with rice flour. If making a boule, use the same procedure as the pre-shape step above and flip the dough into the round banneton. If making a batard, lightly dust the counter with rice flour and flour your hands. Gently pull the dough into a rectangle. Fold the right side of the dough onto the center, then fold the left side into the center. Next, roll the dough up from the bottom to the top. Pull the sides of the dough down to make a rounded edge. Flip the dough into the oval banneton. May pinch the dough to seal the fold if it is coming undone.
 3. **Cold ferment for about 8-16 hours or longer.** Cover the bannetons so the dough does not dry, and place it in the refrigerator for a cold ferment. The longer the dough is left in the fridge, the sourer it will taste, but generally, it shouldn't be cold fermented more than three days.
Note: This step may be skipped for a less sour taste. In that case, cover the dough in the bannetons and leave at room temperature for 1-4 hours.
Use the poke test to determine when to bake: Flour your finger and press the

1. dough. If it springs back, it's not ready; if it slowly springs halfway back, it's ready; if it stays, it's over-proofed and should be baked immediately.

2. **Turn the dough out of the banneton onto parchment paper or bread sling.** Dust the surface with rice flour and smooth over the top of the dough with your hand. Using a bread lame or razor blade, score the dough with at least one long essential (or primary) cut ½-inch deep.
3. **Preheat the oven to 450 F with the empty Dutch oven inside to get it nice and hot.** Many bakers will preheat to 500 F and allow the oven to continue to preheat for 10-30 minutes before lowering it to 450 F to bake. Place the dough in the Dutch oven, bake one at a time, and put the lid on. Bake for 30 minutes. Take off the lid and continue baking for 15-30 more minutes or until the crust is sufficiently browned.

Note: If baking more than one loaf, transfer the partially baked loaf onto a pizza stone or baking sheet to finish baking while adding the second loaf to the Dutch oven and putting the lid on.

4. **Let the loaf/loaves cool for at least one hour before slicing.**
5. **Store at room temperature for 3-5 days.** For best quality, store in a linen bread bag or a bread box, paper bag, Dutch oven, cake carrier, etc.



Sourdough Recipe #2

This recipe is even more nutritious than Recipe #1, with 100% of the grains coming from whole grains, and results in even greater economic support for local/regional small grain farmers. This recipe has an 80% hydration rate to account for more whole-grain flour. The oven spring may be lower than Recipe #1 and may have a slightly closed crumb.

Ingredients:

- 600 grams of local whole-wheat flour.
- 12 grams of non-iodized salt (sea salt or kosher salt).
- 480 grams of unchlorinated water (spring or filtered). Do NOT use hot water.
- 120 grams of sourdough starter at its peak.

Procedure:

Follow the same procedure as outlined in Recipe #1. However, consider letting autolyse rest for longer than one hour (2-3 hours).

Sourdough Recipe #3

This recipe is less nutritious as it provides no whole grains. Depending on the brand of flour purchased, you may still support local/regional small-grain farmers. This recipe has a 70% hydration rate, which is good for beginners. It should produce a good oven spring and open crumb.

Ingredients:

- 500 grams of organic, unbleached bread flour.
- 10 grams of non-iodized salt (sea salt or kosher salt).
- 350 grams of unchlorinated water (spring or filtered). Do NOT use hot water.
- 100 grams sourdough starter at its peak.

Procedure:

Follow the same procedure as outlined in Recipe #1. However, for step number one, fermentolyse may be used instead of autolyse, and it should rest for 30-40 minutes before adding salt in step number two.

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