

Sourdough

A B E G I N N E R S

G U I D E



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Getting Started



What You'll Need:

- Dehydrated sourdough starter
- Unbleached all-purpose flour (or bread flour)
- Water (lukewarm, about 100°F/37°C)
- A clean glass jar or container
- Spoon or spatula
- Kitchen scale
- Rubber band or marker (optional, for tracking rise)



BRING YOUR SOURDOUGH STARTER BACK TO LIFE WITH THESE SIMPLE STEPS!

Day 1:

In a clean jar, add 25g of crushed dehydrated sourdough starter.

Add 25g of lukewarm filtered water (about 100°F/37°C) and stir until the starter dissolves.

Cover loosely (do not tighten all the way we want some air flow with a lid or cloth and let it sit at room temperature (70-75°F) for 24 hours.

Day 2-5

Day 2:

Add 25g of flour and 25g of lukewarm water.

Mix well and cover loosely. Let it rest for another 24 hours at room temperature.

Day 3:

Discard 25g of the starter.

Add 25g of flour and 25g of lukewarm water. Mix thoroughly.

Cover loosely and let it sit for 24 hours.

Days 4-5:

Continue the process of discarding 25g and feeding with 25g of flour and 25g of lukewarm water daily.

By Day 5, your starter should be bubbly and have a pleasant tangy aroma—ready to bake!

*If your starter is not ready, it is ok! Continue feeding and discarding each day. The process can take up to 10 days



What's in
your bread!



Frequently Asked Questions

Understanding Discard:

Discarding is an essential part of maintaining a healthy starter. Removing a portion prevents it from becoming too large and keeps the yeast and bacteria balanced. Always weigh your jar before and after discarding to maintain accurate feeding ratios. You can store your discard in a separate jar in the refrigerator and use it for recipes like pancakes, waffles, muffins, or crackers—no waste!



“Savor the taste of homemade goodness with each slice of fresh sourdough

How Your Starter Should Look:

A healthy starter should have bubbles throughout, rise and fall predictably, and smell pleasantly tangy or slightly yeasty. It should double in size within 4-6 hours after feeding.



Frequently Asked Questions

Beware of a False Rise:

In the early days, your starter may appear active with bubbles and slight rising—this is often a false rise caused by gas-producing bacteria that are active before wild yeast is fully developed. Continue feeding daily until your starter consistently doubles in size and has a strong, tangy aroma.

“sourdough is a testament to simplicity and tradition



Recognizing a Hungry Starter:

A hungry starter will look deflated, may develop a thin layer of liquid on top called hooch, and have a sharp, acidic smell. Hooch is harmless and indicates that your starter needs to be fed. You can stir it back in for a stronger flavor or pour it off for a milder taste.

Best Practices:

While establishing your starter it is very important to feed your starter at the same time every day. Pick a time that is easy for you to remember (after dinner, before dinner, before bed)

Use a rubber band or marker on your jar to track how much your starter rises after each feeding.

Keep your jar in a warm spot (70-75°F) away from drafts for optimal fermentation. If your house runs cold, the top of the refrigerator is a great place.

If your starter isn't doubling in size yet, continue daily feedings until it becomes active and bubbly. It may take up to 10 days for your starter to develop and become strong enough for baking fully, so be patient and consistent with feedings.



Your starter is ready now what?

Once your starter is fully active, you can keep it vibrant with regular feedings:

Daily Use: Discard half of your starter before feeding. Add 50g of flour and 50g of lukewarm water (1:1:1 ratio). Always weigh your jar and starter to maintain accuracy.

Infrequent Use: If you're not baking often, store your starter in the refrigerator. Feed it once a week by removing it from the fridge, discarding half, and feeding it 50g flour and 50g lukewarm water. Let it sit at room temperature for a few hours before returning it to the fridge.

Before Baking: If refrigerated, take it out 1-2 days before baking and feed it daily to reactivate.



RECIPE *Time to bake*

Ingredients

- 100g active sourdough starter (fed and bubbly)
- 375g water (room temperature)
- 500g all purpose flour
- 10g sea salt

Equipment

- Large mixing bowl
- Bench scraper or spatula
- Kitchen scale
- Banneton basket or bowl lined with a floured towel
- Dutch oven

Steps

Step 1: Feed Your Starter

Feed your established sourdough starter 4-6 hours before mixing the dough. Combine 50g starter, 50g water, and 50g flour. Let it sit at room temperature until it is bubbly and active.



Step 2: Mix the Dough

Mix 375g water with 100g active starter in a large bowl until mostly dissolved.

Add 500g flour and mix until no dry bits remain. Cover and let rest for 30 minutes. This is called autolyse, allowing the flour to absorb water and enzymes to activate.

Sprinkle 10g salt over the dough. Mix by pinching and folding the dough until the salt is fully incorporated. Cover and let rest for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes perform 3 stretch and folds. Stretch and Fold: Gently lift one side of the dough and fold it over to the opposite side. Rotate the bowl and repeat 3 more times. This strengthens the dough without kneading. Repeat process 2 more times.

Step 3: Bulk Fermentation

Let the dough rest at room temperature (21-24°C or 70-75°F) for 4-6 hours.

Bulk Fermentation: This is the first long rise where the dough ferments and develops flavor. The dough should increase by about 50% and appear airy with bubbles. For the first few times use a rubber band or dry erase marker to mark the beginning spot of the dough to measure when it increases.

Step 4: Shaping

Lightly flour your work surface and turn out the dough.

Shape the dough into a round by folding the edges into the center and flipping it over. Tighten the shape by gently dragging it against the counter. Place the dough seam-side up in a well-floured banneton or bowl.

Step 5: Final Proof

Cover and refrigerate overnight (8-12 hours) for better flavor and easier scoring.

Step 6: Baking

Preheat your oven to 250°C (480°F) with a Dutch oven inside for at least 30 minutes 1 hr is preferred

Turn the dough out onto parchment paper, seam-side down. Score the top with a sharp knife or dough lame. Scoring helps with expansion, dont cut too deep but not shallow either, try to cut at a angle.

Carefully place the dough into the hot Dutch oven. Cover and bake for 20 minutes. Do not peak during the initial 20 minutes, steam is what helps your dough rise.

Remove the lid and bake for another 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown. You know your bread is ready when you tap on it and it sounds hollow.

Cool on a wire rack for at least 1 hour before slicing. *3hrs is best





Thank you

C O N T A C T

Cherry Acre Farms with any questions we are here to assist you on your Sourdough journey.

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