



STARTING SOURDOUGH

*Getting your sourdough
started*

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TO GOD BE THE GLORY, GREAT THINGS HE HAD DONE

**MANY THANKS GO OUT TO MY FATHER WHO TAUGHT ME TO BAKE WITH SOURDOUGH
AND WHO IS MY SUPPORT LINE, ALWAYS JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY.**

Welcome

Thank you for downloading this free e-book! You'll learn how to make a vivid sourdough starter and get baking with your sourdough starter.

Although baking with sourdough is looked upon as something that is hard and takes huge amounts of time, I can assure you that it's not hard. I repeat, it's not hard. But, you have to be willing, as with anything new, to commit some time and effort.

Once you've successfully baked your first loaf you will never want to go back to any store bought bread, ever. Sourdough bread tastes so good, it brings out all the flavor of the grain.

Also, it has many health benefits and it's easier to digest. Sourdough is perfect for baking with ancient grains, full of flavor and very good for your (gut) health.

Since sourdough is naturally more sensitive to changes in temperature and humidity, you should see the recipes as guidelines. It could very well be that my established sourdough starter needs 12 hours to mature and yours needs only 8 because you live in a warmer climate. The only thing that will help you here is experience. Use your senses, feel the dough, smell the starter regularly and you'll know when it's good to bake with.

Above all, enjoy this journey in learning something new. It's not a race, it's an art that's to be enjoyed and to be passed on to others.

Brightest blessing,

Tahree

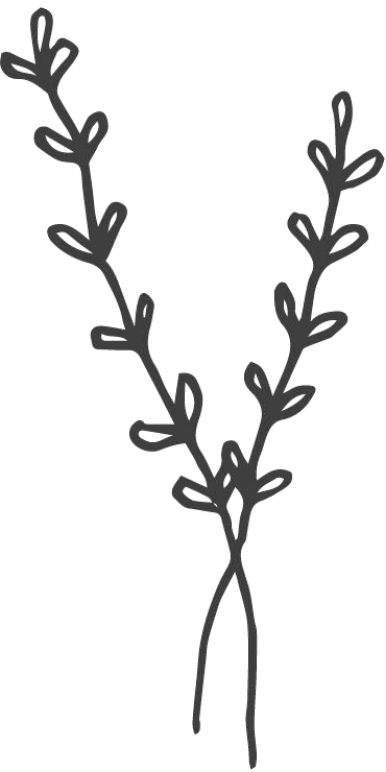


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Bakers' terms

RATIOS

To make it easier to convert recipes, bakers make use of ratios. They calculate in percentages, rather than grams, ounces, etc. While this may seem overwhelming, I'll explain it below, so you'll understand. A recipe might look like this:

EXAMPLE

Flour (100%)
Water (65%)
Sourdough starter (20%)
Salt (2%)

The amount of flour is always 100%.

If you want to use a combination of 300 grams of spelt flour and 200 grams of whole spelt, you'll have 500 grams of flour in total. So, in that recipe 500 grams equals 100%.

Now you can calculate how much water you need. In the recipe you'll find that you need 65% water. Take 65% of 500 grams. $0.65 * 500 = 325$ grams of water.

For the sourdough starter, you need 20% of 500 grams. That's $0.20 * 500 = 100$ grams of starter.

Salt is calculated by taking 2% of 500. That's $0.02 * 500 = 10$ grams of salt for this recipe.

Why is this easier than just using grams, ounces or cups? Using ratios makes it easier to adjust the recipe. For example, in case you want to make a bigger loaf and use 750 grams of flour, you can easily use 750 as 100 % and calculate the other ingredients.

Also, if you want to make slight adaptations to the recipe, using ratios makes it easier to calculate and adapt. Let's say you want to use a little more water and use 70% instead of 65%. Change your recipe to 70% and you can change the amount of other ingredients accordingly.

PROOFING

This is the phase in which your dough will rise.

BAKING WITH STEAM

When your oven is nice and hot, you can slide in the dough. Right after that you'll want to add hot water to the oven to create steam. This to prevent the dough from forming a crust too quickly. The top of the dough will stay moist and stretchy which gives the dough the possibility to rise.

SCORING

Once your dough is shaped and had its final proof, the last thing you want to do before it goes into the oven is scoring the dough. With a sharp knife or razor blade you make cuts into the top of the dough. That gives the dough some weak points. The dough will rise in the oven and open up in the cuts, giving it a nice spring and rustic look.

DUTCH OVEN

A dutch oven is a cast iron pan with a lid, that can withstand very high temperatures. It also has great heat-retaining

properties. That makes it great for baking bread. I recommend any beginner sourdough baker to invest in a cast iron pan, even more than in a fancy mixer (kneading by hand or with a simple hand mixer will give you more feeling with the dough). Buying a Dutch oven is an investment that you'll enjoy for the rest of your life. Cast iron is very strong and durable and you can use it for cooking as well.

Because the cast iron gets very hot and it retains the moisture in the first half of the baking process when the lid is on, loaves almost always get a nice rise and spring when baked in a cast iron pan.

CHAMOTTE STONE

A chamotte stone is another item I find essential when baking with sourdough. It's a clay stone that retains heat and can, like cast iron, withstand high heat. If you bake baguettes or smaller buns you'll get a nice result when baked on a heated chamotte stone.

Because it can retain heat so well, your oven won't cool down as much when you open the door.

Now that we've acquainted ourselves with some baker's terms, let's get to work and get that starter going!



Making your starter

Let's start making a starter. Smell your starter every day, or even a few times a day to get familiar with the different stages and smells that come with it. As the starter matures, you'll be able to identify the smell of an immature starter, a good, mature starter and all the phases in between. And even a bad starter. That's a good skill to learn along the way and to keep developing once to have an established starter. A good starter smell fresh, a bit sour and maybe a bit sweet and yogurt-like. A starter should never smell like (old) cheese, than it's probably gone bad.

Making a starter ready to bake with will take five days. But, I find that getting a strong and really well-established starter can take about two weeks or even longer.

I recommend you use a good, preferably freshly milled, flour. Whole rye flour is what is use, because it's a strong flour to start with. Ancient emmer will work as well, but is more expensive. Einkorn wheat is a little harder to work with and I wouldn't recommend it to start with.

Use a clean glass jar with a lid that fits loosely on top, or use a cloth to cover.

Some people recommend transferring the starter to a clean jar every day, but I don't. The jar will hold a certain balance and climate in which the healthy bacteria can grow. I find that if you change the jar every day, you can disrupt that healthy climate. Ok, your jar will probaly look a bit messy at the end of the week, but let's just see that as a beautiful reminder of our diligence that helped produce this lively culture.

DAY 1

To a glass jar, add 50 grams of fine whole rye flour and 75 grams of water. Stir well and cover loosely with a lid or cloth. It should have a thick, batter like consistency. Place at room temperature on a draft-free place.

Note: the bubbles in the jar are just from stirring, no massive fermentation going on, just yet :)



DAY 2 It could be that you see some bubbles on the surface or when you look through the glass. That's a good sign, some fermentation is going on! Smell the starter before you feed and after you feed it and try to discern between the different smells. For today, take 50 grams of starter and again, add 50 grams of whole rye flour and 75 grams of water. Stir well and cover loosely with a lid or cloth.



DAY 3 Today you should see some bubbles on the surface and on the sides. Your starter should have risen. Again, smell before and after you feed the starter. Notice the difference in smell. A

newly fed starter smells “raw” and more like, just wet rye flour really. A fermented starter smells a bit sour and yogurt like. Feed 50 grams of starter, 50 grams of rye flour and 75 grams of water.

DAY 4 As your starter is maturing, it's also getting stronger. Feed after your starter rose and has started sinking down

again. Today, use 50 grams of starter, 50 grams of rye flour and 75 grams of water.



DAY 5 Today is your starter's final day. If your starter doubles in size after this feed you can bake with it. Place an elastic band around the jar after you feed the starter to measure the progress. Today feed 50 grams of starter 50 grams of rye flour and 75 grams of water.

If you want to bake with it tomorrow feed 50 grams of starter with 100 grams of whole rye flour and 100 grams of water.

NOTES

- Make sure to stir well after each feed. Don't leave any lumps in the starter.
- After day four notice that the starter rises and sinks. When the starter rises it means it still has enough to eat. When it's sinking it means food supplies are getting low. Feed the starter when it sank down.
- Starters get tougher over time. They'll get stronger and they will be able to withstand a hungry day or so.
- Once establish, if you're not going to use your starter, feed at 1:2:2 ratio and place in the fridge.

FEEDING TABLE

Fresh bread on:	Feed on:	Make Dough on:	Bake on:
Monday	Saturday night	Sunday	Monday
Tuesday	Sunday night	Monday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Monday night	Tuesday	Wednesda
Thursday	Tuesday night	Wednesday	Thursday
Friday	Wednesday night	Thursday	Friday
Saturday	Thursday night	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Friday night	Saturday	Sunday



Maintaining your starter

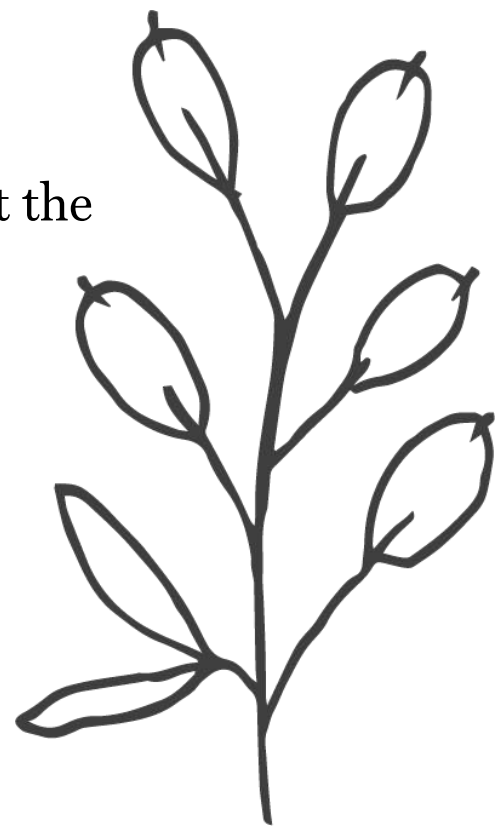
When you've used some of your starter, always make sure you have about 50 grams left. You'll need this left over starter to use for your next baking project.

When you don't use your starter, feed it and place it in the fridge. A well balanced starter can stay in the fridge for weeks. Ideally it should be fed every week when not in use.

When your starter has been sitting in the fridge for a while, a brown, watery film can form at the top. This is completely harmless. You can stir your starter and feed again. Always use your senses, if it doesn't smell right or you have any doubt, don't use it. If the starter has mold on top and you're a beginner baker, discard it.

When you want to bake again, take the starter out of the fridge the night before you want to make the dough and feed it at the following ratio 1:2:2 (starter:water:flour). For example, take 50 grams of starter, add 100 grams of water, stir well and add 100 grams of flour and stir again. Let sit at the counter to double in size overnight.

If you want to measure the process of your starter. Place a rubber band around the jar at the same height as the your starter. Once the starter will rise and get bubbly you can see how much it rose the next morning.



Recipes

FOR EVERY RECIPE...

These directions are the same for every recipe. So I put them here in one place for you to consult as you bake.

PROOFING

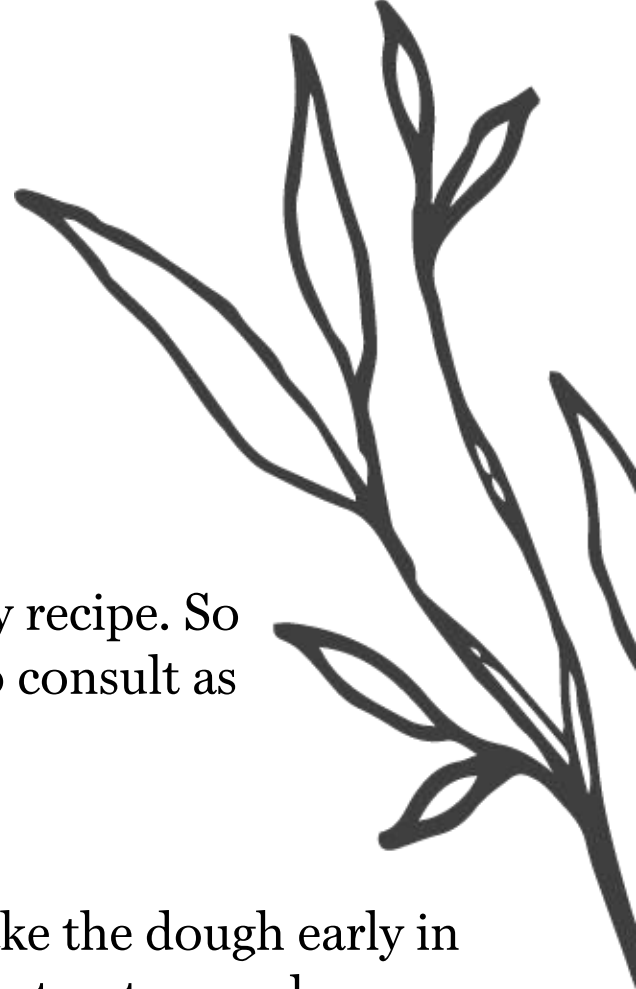
Proof overnight in the fridge if you make the dough early in the morning or proof in a cool spot (just not as cool as your fridge, but certainly not as warm as your kitchen) if you make the dough in the late afternoon or evening.

THE OVEN

The next day, pre-heat your oven to 250°C/482°F for at least an hour. Place a baking tray on the lowest rack and place your chamotte stone and/or dutch oven on the rack above. It's essential for the chamotte stone and/or dutch oven to be pre-heated.

FINAL SHAPING

Bring water to a boil right before the oven is fully heated. Take your dough from its proofing basket or bowl and place on a slightly floured surface, dust with flour and do some slight, final shaping if necessary. Don't punch or kneed the dough anymore, the more you'll work the dough the less the result will be. Just do some slight shaping.



SCORING

Place the dough in the dutch oven. Be confident, you'll have to do this quickly. If you don't use a dutch oven place the dough on a floured bread peel or floured wooden chopping board. Score the bread in the desired way. I recommend starting with a simple square, diagonal lines or one line following the bread's curve on one side of the bread. Make the cut around 3/4 inch deep or about 2 cm.



BAKING

Place the dutch oven back into the oven or slide the dough from the bread peel into the oven. Close the door. Take about 300 - 400 ml. of boiled water and pour unto the baking tray. Bake with lid/ steam for the first half. After the first half release steam/ remove lid and bake as instructed in the recipe or until desired browning and crust is achieved.

IMPORTANT NOTE !

When you use a dutch oven, you don't need to add water to your baking tray. The lid wil keep the moisture inside the cast iron pan. Always slightly mix salt with flour before kneading.

EASY *Speltt* SOURDOUGH BREAD



RATIOS:

Flour (100%)

Water (60%)

Starter (20%)

Salt (2%)

EXAMPLE:

500 gr. spelt flour

300 gr. water

100 gr. starter

10 gr. salt

Directions:

The evening before you want to make the dough, take your starter out of the fridge and feed. Use 50 gr. of starter and feed with 100 gr. of water and 100 gr. flour.

The next day, take 100 gr. of your fed starter and mix with the water for the dough. Add the flour and salt and mix until you have a nice, slightly sticky ball of dough. Dust with flour and place in the bowl or transfer to proofing basket. Cover and leave to proof.

Follow directions as stated in the “FOR EVERY RECIPE” section.

Bake for 20 minutes with lid/ steam. After 20 minutes release steam/ remove lid. Bake for 16-21 minutes until desired crust is achieved. Let cool slightly before slicing.

SOURDOUGH *Baguette* WITH WHOLE SPELT

RATIOS:

Spelt flour (70%)
Whole spelt flour (30%)
Fed starter (20%)
Water (60%)
Olive oil (2%)
Salt (2%)

EXAMPLE:

350 gr. spelt flour
150 gr. whole spelt flour
100 gr. fed starter
300gr. water
10 gr. olive oil
10 gr. salt

Directions:

Mix fed starter with water. Add flour, salt and olive oil.

Knead until a ball forms and you have a nice supple, slightly sticky dough. Dust with flour and place in the bowl or transfer to proofing basket. Cover and leave to proof overnight. Next, follow directions as stated in the “FOR EVERY RECIPE” section, until FINAL SHAPING.

For the shaping, take the dough out of the bowl and place on a floured surface. With a sharp knife cut the dough into five long pieces. Give it a final baguette like shape and score with three lines about 1/2 inch or 1.5 cm deep. Bake for 15 min. with steam at 250° C/482° F, release steam and bake until desired browning occurs; about 5-10 min.



IN-A-HURRY SOURDOUGH BREAD

This recipe is great to use when you've fed your starter a few times and it's nice and strong. Sometimes I forget to feed my starter the night before and I need my bread a day earlier. How your bread will turn out depends on the maturity of your starter and the environment in which the dough will proof. The only way to find out how far you can "stretch" yours is to just try, and try it, and try again. I highly recommend baking this in-a-hurry bread in a dutch oven, since that will give the dough a good spring and texture.



This is what I do when I want to make the dough on the same day that I bake. First thing in the morning (that's between 6 and 7 a.m.) I take my starter out of the fridge and let it come to room temperature for about an hour.

Next, follow the ratios for the Easy Spelt Sourdough Bread.

The difference here is that your starter "feeds" on the bread dough, you don't feed it in advance. Mix your starter, water, flour and salt until it forms a ball of dough, slightly sticky.

Cover the bowl and let the dough proof in an environment that's cooler than your living room, but not as cool as your fridge, about 15°C/59°F. If you have time during the day, it's good to do some "stretch and folds". While the dough is in the bowl, pick it up a little at the top, stretch it and place it over the rest of the dough that's in the bowl. Do this for all



four “sides” of the dough and form in a ball. Don’t punch or knead, just gently stretch the dough.

Around 7 p.m...

Place your dough in the fridge, uncovered. If you want to use a proofing basket, now’s the time to transfer the dough to the basket, don’t forget to flour the basket. Cooling the dough, will make it easier to handle when you want to transfer it to your dutch oven.

At 8 p.m...

When you’re ready to bake, follow the directions under **BAKING** and bake for 20 minutes with lid/ steam. After 20 minutes release steam/ remove lid. Bake for 16-21 minutes until desired browning and crust is achieved.

Try different times and see if it makes any difference if you do stretch and folds. That’s the best way to get to know your starter. As you experiment with sourdough you’ll learn by the texture of the dough and the smell of your starter when it’s mature and developed. Don’t get discouraged if things don’t turn out as you expected. See which steps you took and review where you could make changes next time. Enjoy the process, you’ll always learn something new.

SOURDOUGH BREAD WITH ANCIENT WHEAT

Emmer

This is our go-to bread that we eat almost every day. Try and experiment with different ratios. Try more or less emmer wheat and see how different the dough will turn out. Again, enjoy the process, you'll always learn something new.

RATIOS:

Spelt flour (60%)
Whole emmer flour (40%)
Fed starter (20%)
Water (60%)
Salt (2%)

EXAMPLE:

300 gr. spelt flour
200 gr. whole emmer flour
100 gr. fed starter
300 gr. water
10 gr. salt

Directions:

The evening before you want to make the dough, take your starter out of the fridge and feed. Use 50 gr. of starter and feed with 100 gr. of water and 100 gr. flour.

The next day, take 100 gr. of your fed starter and mix with the water for the dough. Add the flour and salt and mix until you have a nice, slightly sticky ball of dough. Dust with flour and place in the bowl or transfer to proofing basket. Cover and leave to proof.

Follow directions as stated in the “FOR EVERY RECIPE” section.

Bake for 20 minutes with lid/ steam. After 20 minutes release steam/ remove lid. Bake for 16-21 minutes until desired crust is achieved. Let cool slightly before slicing.



SOURDOUGH

Raisin BUNS

RATIOS:

Flour (100%)

Milk (60%)

Raisins (60%)

Starter (20%)

Butter (10%)

Salt (2%)

EXAMPLE:

500 gr. spelt flour

300 gr. milk

300 gr. raisins

100 gr. starter

50 gr. butter

10 gr. salt



Directions:

The evening before you want to make the dough, take your starter out of the fridge and feed. Use 50 gr. of starter and feed with 100 gr. of water and 100 gr. flour. Soak the raisins.

The next day, take 100 gr. of your fed starter and mix with the water for the dough. Add the flour and salt and mix until you have a nice, slightly sticky ball of dough. Fold in the raisins. Dust with flour and place in the bowl or transfer to proofing basket. Cover and leave to proof.

Follow directions until FINAL SHAPING as stated in the “FOR EVERY RECIPE” section. Cut the dough into bun-size pieces.

Bake for 20 with steam. After 20 minutes release steam. Bake for 16-21 minutes until desired crust is achieved. Let cool slightly before slicing.



POSTFACE

The HAVEN *of rest*

Thanks again for downloading this free e-book. I hope it's been helpful and it's given you a good start in your sourdough career. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. And please share and pass on the knowledge. Also, I'd love to see your creations so please share, share, share!

Follow along on my blog at the Haven of Rest for more inspiration on baking with sourdough.

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