

Sourdough Bread

Methods and recipes gleaned from Claire Saffitz and Bake with Jake

Feed your room temperature starter 4 hours before you want to begin this process.

Ingredients to feed/ripen starter for bread:

- 20 grams room temperature unfed starter from your starter jar
- 50 grams of flour
- 50 grams of lukewarm water (no warmer than 100°F/38°C)

Mix together your starter, flour and water. Allow the starter to ripen in a warm (75°F/24°C) place. When the starter has doubled in size and a small bit of your starter floats, that is when you know it's ripe time to make bread.

Ingredients to make bread:

- 100 grams fed and ripe starter
- 450 grams of flour
- 310 grams of lukewarm water (no warmer than 100°F/38°C)
- 10 grams of salt

STEP ONE: Add lukewarm water to the bowl of your mixer along with your ripe/risen starter. Mix well until the water is cloudy. Add in your flour and salt and install your bread hook (alternatively, you can pull this together by hand in a bowl). Mix together on medium low until no more flour remains (scrape the bowl if necessary). As soon as all the flour has been hydrated, you are done in the mixer. Transfer your dough to a well oiled bowl and cover it and leave it to rest (autolyse) for 30 minutes.

STEP TWO: When the time is up, pull your dough up from every side and over the top. Continue to pull on all sides until the dough tightens up and is hard to pull across. This is your first set of folds. Cover and leave to rest for the next 30 minutes.

STEP THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX: At the end of 30 minutes, you'll notice your dough is much different than the first fold. It's smoother and it's starting to get puffy. It's time to start your full folds for the next 2 hours every 30 minutes. To fold this time, wet your hands and scoop your hands under the middle of the dough pulling up as far as it will go (wiggling it to get it to stretch) and then folding over on itself. Do it again from the opposite direction. Turn the bowl and do it from the first direction again, at the third turn, the dough should be fighting back and not wanting to stretch. So it's time to let it rest again. Repeat this instruction for the next 2 hours or until you've done 4 total stretch and folds.

STEP SEVEN: After your final stretch and fold, you are going to replace the lid and allow the dough to rise at room temperature for about 2 hours (or until the dough gets puffy and has risen about 30%).

NOTE: You can skip this step and go straight to step 8 if you don't have time.

STEP EIGHT: Cover your dough and let it rest in the refrigerator overnight.

STEP NINE: In the morning, take your dough from the refrigerator and allow it to come to room temperature. It will take 1-2 hours depending on the temperature of your house (If you've skipped step 8, allow your dough to rise at this point. Should take only about 1-2 hours).

STEP TEN: We are going to preshape our dough now. Scoop your dough out onto an unfloured counter. Sprinkle a little flour on the top of the dough and flip the dough over so that the flour is under the dough ball. Stretch your dough gently into all directions and fold it towards the middle, criss crossing and letting the dough stick to itself. At the end, roll your dough inward while tugging and stretching gently (you don't want to lose your fermentation bubbles) until your bread is in a log shape and everything is tight. Sift flour over the top and cover with a towel. Allow it to rest for 30 minutes.

STEP ELEVEN: If your dough log has retained most of its height, you are ready for your final shape. Flour a cloth and place it inside a banneton or a bowl about the size of your bread ball/log will be. Flip your log over on the counter (that is, floured side down again) and press outward gently (it shouldn't move a lot). Pull outward a little and fold it towards the middle again, cross crossing and letting the dough stick to itself. If you are making a ball/boule shape for baking, roll your dough lightly until you have a bit of a ball. Then carefully push and pull the ball around the counter so it stretches the dough up and over your ball. If you are baking an oval/log, repeat the process of rolling your dough inward, while tugging and stretching gently. When you get to the end of the roll, roll back and forth until the sticks together. When you are satisfied with the shape of your dough without overworking it, flour the top and turn it over inside your floured banneton/bowl with the seam side up. If you have seam areas pulling apart, pinch them together so they stay.

STEP TWELVE: Place your dough inside the banneton/bowl into the refrigerator and allow the dough to chill for 2 hours or so.

STEP THIRTEEN: Place your dutch oven and lid in your oven and preheat at 450°F/230°C for 30-60m..

STEP FOURTEEN: Tip your dough onto a piece of parchment paper large enough to easily slide into your dutch oven without burning yourself. Dust any heavy amounts of flour off the top of your dough. Using a sharp knife or lame, make a cut from the bottom of one side of your bread across and down to the bottom of the opposite side. Place your bread into your preheated dutch oven and spray your dough with a bit of water before quickly covering it (trapping the steam inside). Alternately you can throw in a couple ice cubes (make sure they go under the parchment).

Bake for 25 minutes covered, then remove the cover carefully and bake an additional 10-20 minutes or until the bread reaches your desired color. Allow the bread to cool completely before cutting.