

Recipe for simple sourdough bread

Yields 1 loaf or 2 small loaves

Kitchen equipment needed:

- Digital scale
- Dutch oven or pizza stone
- Sharp knife
- Spray bottle with water
- Banneton basket (optional)

Ingredients:

- 160g sourdough starter (feed 8 hours prior)
- 600g + 20g water (room temp preferred)
- 800g bread flour (can also do 600g bread and 200g whole wheat)
- 17g salt (1 Tablespoon)

1. Combine in a bowl 160g starter with 600g water and 800g flour. Mix until a shaggy dough forms, cover bowl with plastic and a dish towel and allow to rest on the counter for 30 minutes to an hour. This step is called autolyze, which allows the dough to build strength without the salt interfering (salt inhibits fermentation).

2. Meanwhile, mix the 20g of water with 17g of salt, to help dissolve the salt crystals.

3. After the autolyze time has passed, mix in the salt until fully incorporated. Kneading it in the bowl about 7 times. Cover again with plastic and towel, and allow to bulk proof (rest) for 3 hours, folding dough every 30 minutes. This process builds strength and builds proper gluten strands.

4. After 3 hours pre-shape the dough. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and lightly roll dough into a nice round. If you wish to have 2 smaller loaves, divide dough in half and roll into two rounds. Be careful not to overwork the dough. Dust the rounds with flour and allow to rest for another 30 minutes.

5. After 30 minutes, it is time to finally shape the dough. Place the round seam side up (smooth side down) on a lightly floured surface. Gently press down the dough, making it slightly flatter. It should look like a large puffy pita bread. From here, fold the right side into

the center of the round. Then fold the left side, stretching it over the right fold. You should have an oval shape. Next, take the top of the oval shape, and start rolling in, towards yourself, pressing down to seal at every fold. Once complete, gently turn the dough in a circular motion using both hands, creating a seal on the bottom of the round, creating a nice smooth top.

6. Once achieved, place round seam side up, in a floured bowl or basket (banneton). Cover with plastic and a towel. Allow dough to rest for 3-4 hours, or place in fridge for 8-24 hours to retard. If retarding dough, allow dough to sit out at room temp for an hour before baking.

7. Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. If using a Dutch oven (cast iron pot) to bake bread, place in oven while it is pre-heating. If just baking on a stone, allow that to pre-heat with the oven as well.

8. Once pre-heated turn over dough into Dutch oven, so that seam side is down and smooth side is up. This can be tricky but you will get the hang of it. Using a sharp knife, score (cut) a line down the center of the bread. This is very important because this is where the air and steam will escape. Place the lid on the Dutch oven and place back into the oven.

9. Spray the walls of the oven with water in order to create steam and a humid environment for the bread score to open up. Quickly close the oven and bake for 30 minutes.

10. If using a Dutch oven remove the lid after 30 minutes and allow to bake for another 30-45 minutes until a nice dark color is achieved.

11. If baking on a pizza stone, check if bread needs to be rotated in the oven after 30 minutes. Continue baking for 20-40 minutes until proper color is achieved. Remember the darker the color, the more flavor.

12. Once removed from the oven, place bread on a cooling rack and allow to cool for at least 45 minutes. Warm bread is tempting, but bread actually achieves fullest potential of flavor after 4 hours.

13. Slice the bread, sit down, and enjoy!