

# Sourdough

## Care of the Starter

Keep your starter in the fridge when not in use, ideally feed every couple weeks. I have left my starter for months in the fridge with no feedings, and despite taking a few days to wake back up, it always has. **Never fully tighten the lid on your starter! Always leave loose to allow gasses to escape, otherwise the jar could burst.**

For feeding your starter, start by allowing it to come up to room temperature. Next, discard roughly half so as to not overfill the jar; if your jar is low enough, don't discard any. Add enough water to make the starter runny after thorough stirring. Finally, add whole wheat flour a spoonful at a time until the starter becomes quite stiff when mixed. I tend to the less hydrated side (ie stiffer). Allow it to sit at room temperature until you start to see large bubbles forming, and the starter begins to expand and rise. Once it is very active, this is the time to either make your bread, or pop it back in the fridge before it overflows out of the container and makes a mess!

If your container starts to get too crusty on the inside or even gets some mold growing, just scrape off the top of the starter and transfer what's remaining to a new container and carry on with feeding as normal.

## Simple Bread Recipe

### *Ingredients*

90g starter

385g water

520g white flour (or experiment with mixing other amounts, like 200g whole wheat + 320g white)

12g salt

### *Method*

Whisk the starter and water in a large bowl. Add flour and salt, and stir until a thick, shaggy dough forms. Cover and let rest for 20 minutes. Do first stretch-and-folds, let rest 20 minutes (search YouTube for "sourdough stretch and fold" if you are unfamiliar with this technique). Do a total of 3 series of stretch-and-folds with 20 minutes in between, then cover and let rise until at



least double in size. Depending on season / temperature, this could take anywhere from 8 to 24 hours. Don't let it over-rise though, as it will turn to a runny batter consistency.

After fully risen, do the final series of gentle stretch-and-folds, this time lifting dough from the centre and letting gravity sag it down into a bowl. Transfer to a greased loaf pan, sprinkle the top with rice flour if you wish, and put in the fridge uncovered for at least an hour, preferably longer. I routinely leave mine in the fridge for most of the day.

Preheat the oven to 500F with a tray of water in it on the lower rack. Once the oven is up to temp and water is boiling, put bread in the oven and set a timer for 10 minutes. When 10 minutes is up, take bread out quickly and slash top with razor to allow dough to expand. Return to the oven immediately, and bake for another 20 minutes. When 20 minutes is up, remove boiling water and reduce oven temp to 450F. Bake for an additional 10 minutes, then remove from the oven and loaf pan and let it fully cool on the counter before cutting.

Instead of a pan with water in the oven, if you have a dutch oven you can use that instead. Just line your breadpan with parchment paper before plopping the dough in it after the final stretch and fold, then put it in the fridge like this. Preheat the oven with the dutch oven inside, and when it's up to temperature, transfer the dough on the parchment paper into the dutch oven. Keep the lid on until you get to the step where you reduce the heat to 450, then leave the lid off for the remainder to crisp the crust up a bit.

