

BAKING INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOURDOUGH BREAD

This recipe is from a friend, but you can find tons of other recipes online. I am not an experienced baker (this was my very first time making bread!), so please excuse any rookie mistakes. However, have confidence knowing that if I can bake it, then YOU absolutely can!

*****You will need to make the “starter” one week in advance and create the “leaven” (step 1) the night before you begin the rest of the bread-making process. Once started, this recipe takes 8-9 hours to complete and requires attention at frequent intervals. *****

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of starter (see starter instructions in other attachment)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of all-purpose flour (for leaven)
- 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of all-purpose flour (plus additional flour for surfaces)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tablespoon of salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water (for leaven)
- 2 cups of warm water

Supplies:

- Apron (optional)
- Drinking glass
- Spoon
- Bowl (8-9” diameter)
- Timer
- Cookie sheet
- Oven-safe casserole dish
- 2 kitchen towels
- Spatula
- Measuring cups (1/4 cup, 1 cup)
- Tablespoon
- Cutting board
- Bread knife

Directions:

1. To make leaven, add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of tap water and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of flour to a small amount (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) of your starter and mix until consistent throughout. Leave the mixture on the counter in a covered bowl overnight (~12 hrs).
2. By morning, you should notice bubbles in the leaven, like a mousse. To test if it is ready, gently remove a spoonful of the leaven and add it to a glass of water. If the leaven floats, you can begin the daylong bread-making process. If it does not, you may need to wait a little longer. If it still isn't ready after 24 hours, then your starter might not be active enough to make bread. You may need to create a new starter from scratch.
3. Remove one cup of your leaven and add it to a clean bowl. Store the rest of the leaven covered in the fridge. This will be your starter for future loaves (see “Starter Instructions” attachment for care instructions).

4. Add 2 cups of warm water to the leaven and mix by hand until consistent throughout. Make sure there are no lumps!
5. Add half of the flour to the liquid leaven, mix by hand (it helps if you wet your hands first), add the rest of the flour (totaling $5 \frac{1}{4}$ cups), and mix by hand until the dough is consistent throughout (about 10 minutes). Leave the dough in the bowl covered by a towel for 20 minutes.
6. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ of a tablespoon of salt along with $2 \frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water (use your judgement - do not let the dough get too wet, like mud) to the dough and mix. Leave the dough in the bowl covered by a towel for 30 minutes.
7. Lift up/stretch-out the side of the dough directly in front of you and fold it in half. After rotating the bowl 90 degrees, repeat the process again. After you've rotated and folded the bread four times, let it sit covered for 30 minutes. Repeat this process every 30 minutes over the course of 3 hours. You should have folded the bread six times at the end of 3 hours. You might notice that the dough has grown substantially.
8. Sprinkle flour on a clean surface or a cutting board, and remove the dough from the bowl, placing it on the surface/cutting board. Sprinkle flour over the entire surface of the dough. Cover the dough and leave it out on the surface/cutting board for 20 minutes.
9. Flip over the dough, fold it in half one way, fold it in half again on the diagonal side, then on the side opposite that, and lastly, fold it in half from the side opposite from where you started. The result should look like a neatly folded package. Sprinkle flour in your bowl, then gently move the dough (folded side up) back over to the bowl. Leave the dough in the bowl covered by a towel for 2 hours.
10. Gently transfer the dough, with the help of a spatula, over to a floured cookie sheet. Cut an "X" in the top of the dough.
11. Prepare a casserole dish with a towel covered COMPLETELY by water.
12. Preheat the oven to 450° Fahrenheit.
13. After the oven has finished pre-heating, add your water dish with a towel to the bottom rack and your dough on a cookie sheet to the top rack.
14. Remove the water dish after 20 minutes.
15. Keep an eye on the bread for the next 10 minutes. Remove by the 15-minute mark (for a maximum cook time of 35 minutes).
16. The crust should be hard. Leave the bread out to cool for 10 minutes before cutting & enjoying!

Special thanks to Pedro and Anita for this recipe.