

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOURDOUGH STARTER

Friends recommended this recipe to me, but you can find tons of sourdough starter recipes online. The primary ingredient for a sourdough “starter” is wild yeast, a fungus that lives EVERYWHERE – in the air, in flowers, in trees, on fruits & vegetables, etc. To learn more about yeast, and for a fun scientific experiment, check out [this video](#).

*****You will need to make the starter at least 5 days in advance of the bread-making process.*****

Ingredients:

- 3 ½ cups of all-purpose flour
- 2 cups of water

Supplies:

- 2-quart glass or plastic container (not metal)
- Measuring cups (1 cup, 1/2 cup, ¼ cup)
- Tablespoon
- Kitchen towel

Directions:

Day 1

Combine ¾ cup of flour (plus 2 tablespoons) and ½ cup of water in your container. Stir until consistent throughout. It should look like a sticky, thick dough. Scrape down the sides, cover with a towel, and store. You should place the container in a room with a consistent temperature (70-75°Fahrenheit). The top of a fridge may be a good spot. Just make sure it's somewhere your pets can't reach!

Day 2

Add ¾ cup of flour (plus 2 tablespoons) and ½ cup of water to the mixture. Scrape down the sides, cover with a towel, and store. You should start to see bubbles and notice a slightly sweet smell signaling that the yeast is reproducing. If you don't see bubbles yet – don't worry! Each environment is different.

Day 3

Add ¾ cup of flour (plus 2 tablespoons) and ½ cup of water to the mixture. Stir until consistent throughout. Scrape down the sides, cover with a towel, and store. Your starter should have bubbles by now and may start smelling sour.

Day 4

Add ¾ cup of flour (plus 2 tablespoons) and ½ cup of water to the mixture. Stir until consistent throughout. Scrape down the sides, cover with a towel, and store. By now, your starter should be very bubbly and it might have even doubled in size!

Day 5

Your starter should be even larger than yesterday, webbed with bubbles, and smell sour. If so, then you're ready to start making your leaven (see “Sourdough Instructions” attachment for directions). If not continue on to the next step.

Day 6 & beyond

- Add the same quantities of flour and water as above, mix, scrape down the sides, and store covered until your starter is “ready”. When you make bread with your starter, keep a small portion (at least $\frac{1}{4}$ a cup) in a covered container in the fridge.
- If your starter isn’t “ready” after 7 days, you might need to start the process over again.
- To maintain a sourdough starter, “feed” it two tablespoons of flour and two tablespoons of water every 7-10 days. If you don’t make leaven/bread with it every week, discard half of the starter when you “feed” it. Some recommend that you leave the starter out overnight when you feed it to allow the yeast some time to recuperate before putting it back in the fridge.
- If you plan to be away for longer than a week, store the starter in the freezer. To “re-start” it, dissolve the frozen mixture in 4 ounces of water and 4 ounces of flour and continue feeding it until it becomes active again.