



Making Sourdough

Needed Equipment

- Large mixing bowl
- Medium bowl (mine holds 6 cups with an inch to spare at the top)
- Kitchen scale
- Cotton cloth napkin or tea towel
- Stainless bench scraper or spatula with no holes
- Silicone or rubber spatula
- Large cast-iron or enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven with cover
- Parchment paper

Ingredients / Baker's Percentages

Percentage	Weight based on 1,000 g flour	Weight based on 500 g flour	Volume based on 500 g flour
100% flour ¹	1,000 g	500 g	5 cups
80% water	800 g	400 g	1.69 cups (roughly 1 ² / ₃ cups)
15% starter	150 g	75 g	1 ¹ / ₃ cup
2% salt	20 g	10 g	2 scant teaspoons

¹ At least 65% should be all-purpose flour or bread flour.

Approximate Timeframes

Activity	Active Time	Passive Time
Activate starter / autolyse dough	5-10 minutes	6-8 hours
Make dough / stretch and fold	10 minutes	2 hours
Bulk rise	0 minutes	6-8 hours
Preshape / shape loaf	5 minutes	30 minutes
Proof	0 minutes	2-3 hours (or in fridge overnight)
Bake (includes 30 minutes to preheat, baking time, and resting time)	0 minutes	90 minutes
Total Time	20-25 minutes	18-23 hours

Be patient. Plan ahead. Rushing the timeframes will not produce a satisfactory result.

Prep / Activate Starter

- 1:1:1 ratio of starter, flour, and water by weight
- Approximate volume based on 65 grams of each ingredient:
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup starter
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons flour
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- Activation takes 6-8 hours (will be $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 times original volume)

Before and After

Just-fed starter

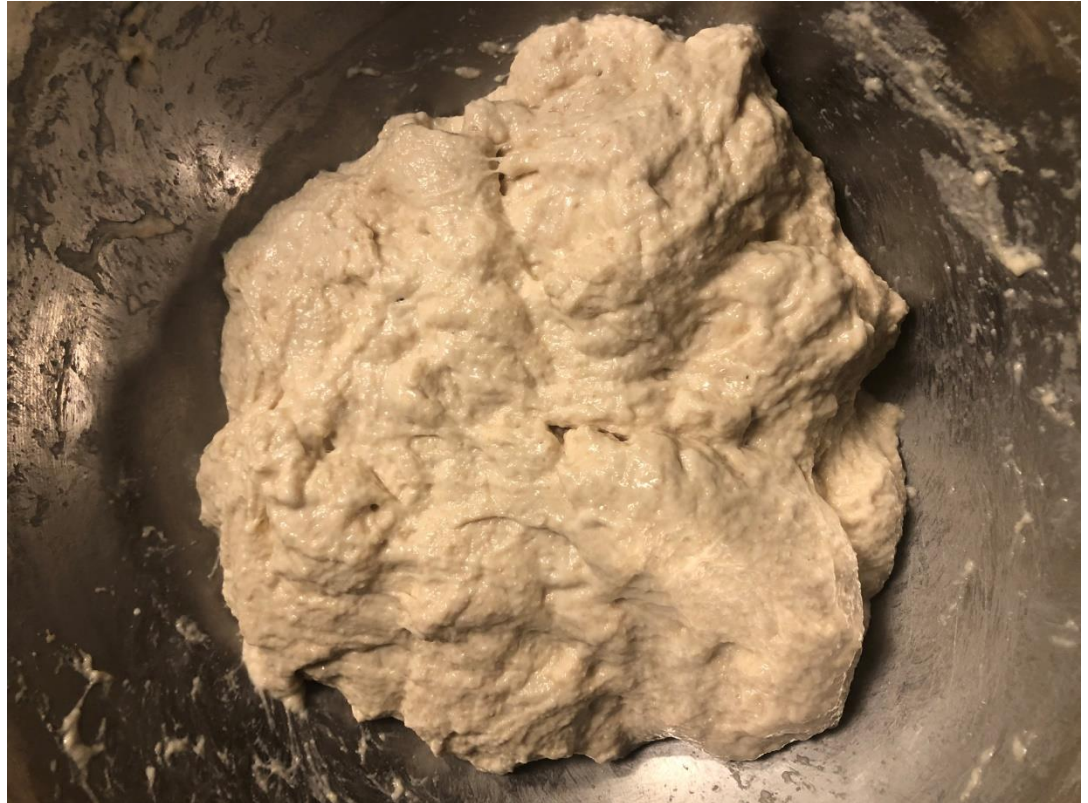


Fully activated starter



Autolyse Flour

Mix flour and water together and let it rest until starter is fully activated.



Make Dough

- Add salt to autolysed flour
- Add activated starter²
- Mix until combined
- Let sit for 30 mins.

² See Baker's percentages.

Stretch and Fold

- Watch [video](#).
- Stretch and fold every 30 minutes over the course of 90 minutes.

Bulk Rise

- Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature for 6-8 hours.
- Consider timing the bulk rise so it can be done overnight.
- Dough will have doubled in size and you should see bubbles on the surface.



Shape Dough

- Pre-shape
 - Flour work surface
 - Gently scrape risen dough from bowl onto surface
 - Tease out to oblong shape
 - Fold like an envelope
 - Roll toward you
 - Let rest for 30 minutes
- Final Shape
 - Prep medium bowl with cloth and flour
 - Shape into ball by pulling edges toward center
 - Create surface tension

Proof Dough

Final formed dough



Risen dough



Transfer to Dutch Oven

- Preheat covered Dutch oven in oven at 450°F. This may take 30 or more minutes.
- Center large sheet of parchment over risen dough; invert bowl; peel away cloth.
- Score dough.
- Gather four corners of parchment, lift, and place into hot Dutch oven.



Bake!

- Bake with cover on at 450°F for 20 minutes.
- Remove cover and bake for another 20 minutes.
- Carefully remove bread from Dutch oven and let rest undisturbed on a rack for at least another 20 minutes.

Note: All ovens are different. Base doneness on color.

Investing in Equipment

While not necessary, if you decide to make sourdough part of a regular routine, you may want to consider investing in the following equipment:

- **Kitchen scale.** Highly recommend. Measurements are much more precise. Also helpful for portioning.
- **Proofing basket.** These come in various shapes. They take the place of the bowl for proofing.
- **Lame.** This is basically a razor blade with a handle. It makes scoring bread much easier.
- **Electric serrated knife.** These are great for making thinner slices suitable for sandwiches. Be careful when using, though. These can be dangerous, as the blade can slip on the crust.
- **Bread bags.** For storage or gift-giving, these can be disposable plastic bags with a tie or canvas style bags that allow for more exchange of oxygen.