

## SophsLoafs Sourdough Recipe

### **Starter:**

Feed the starter once a week if you are keeping it in the fridge and if you are keeping it at room temperature, then every 24 hours. If you are storing it in the fridge, make sure to take the starter out about 2 days before you want to bake with it and feed it those 2 days to make it active and bubbly again.

### **Ingredients:**

100g starter  
100g water (about 90 degrees F)  
100g All-purpose flour

If the starter is in the fridge, take it out about 3 hours before you feed it to let it come to room temperature.

Discard all but 100g starter. Add 100g warm water and mix to combine. Add the 100g all-purpose flour and mix until there are no dry spots. Cover loosely and keep at room temperature. If you are putting it back in the fridge, you can do so after 3-4 hours after feeding.

### **Leaven:**

This is an in-between step between the starter and the bread dough. This is best made 24 hours before making the bread dough

### **Ingredients for Leaven:**

20g starter  
100g bread flour  
100g water

### **Bread Dough:**

#### **Ingredients:**

750g water (85 degrees F)  
200g Leaven  
900g White flour (I use Bread flour)  
100g Whole Wheat flour  
20g salt

In a large bowl, weigh the flour and toss it around with your fingertips to aerate it. In another bowl measure the water and then add the leaven to the water. The leaven should float when you drop it in! Mix the leaven into the water until it is homogenous. Pour the water mixture into the bowl with the flour. Keep your fingers together in a curved paddle shape and fold the dough over itself by working your hand directly under the dough, lifting and stretching it up, and quickly turning your wrist to bring the elongated swatch of dough over itself and connected to the opposite side. It is a swoop underneath,

a quick pull up, and then an ambitious flip of the wrist. Repeat this motion, rotating the bowl, until the dough has fully pulled away from the sides and formed into a loose ball. This usually takes me about 3-4 minutes. Use a bench knife to scrape down the sides of the bowl underneath the dough. The dough will be a little shaggy and tacky at this point. Sprinkle the 20g of salt evenly across the surface of the dough, cover and let rest for 30 minutes without incorporating the salt.

This rest is called the autolyze, in which the dough fully hydrates and the gluten starts to build strength while enzymatic activity begins.

After the autolyze, begin to pinch in the salt. Hold your hands like crab claws. Starting closest to your body, gather the dough between your “pinchers” and work away from you to the opposite side of the bowl, firmly squeezing and releasing the dough like a rope between your hands. The salt will dissolve, and you will immediately feel the break take on a sense of tension. Once there is no trace of salt, cover and let it rest for another 30 minutes.

The dough is now entering bulk fermentation. This can last up to 4-5 hours in which time you will give the dough a series of folds. During bulk fermentation, the dough will rise in volume and begin to feel lofty, exhibiting bubbles here and there on the surface.

A fold consists of lifting and stretching the dough up and across itself to the opposite side of the container, in a series of four turns, making a ball of dough in the middle of the vessel. Use your whole hand to lift, stretch, and flip the dough. Fold 30 minutes after incorporating the salt and then every hour on the hour. You may divide your dough within 45 minutes of the final fold if it's relaxed enough.

When it is time to divide the dough, turn it out onto a lightly flour-dusted surface. Using both hands, gently lift and stretch the right edge of the dough to the middle. Gently lift and stretch the left side towards the middle. Repeat the same motions from the top edge down toward the center and from the bottom edge towards the center. The dough will go from a wiggly mass to a taut rectangle. Try not to over-handle the dough. Divide the dough in half (1kg each).

Pre-shape the dough. Take care to use the least amount of flour possible. Gently pat a piece of dough into a rectangle. Lift the bottom edge up and press it into the loaf two-thirds of the way up. You will now be looking a bulge of dough with a lip at the top. Take the sides, stretch them gently and bring them to cross over the center of a dough. The dough will now look like an open envelope. With gusto, take the bottom edge and flip it up to meet the top lip, sealing it into a cylinder. Repeat with the other loaf and then cover with a cloth (cotton, not terry) and let rest for 10-30 minutes.

Prepare a proofing basket (or a bowl with a kitchen cloth in it). Make sure the kitchen cloth is not terry cloth—you don't want fabric in your bread! Lightly flour the cloth.

Final Shaping. Using a bench knife, flip over a preform and gently pat it into a rectangle. Again, take the bottom edge and fold it two-thirds of the way up the loaf. Gently stretch the sides and bring them to cross over the center. More overlap here will provide nice core tension so the bread maintains its shape during the final proof. Flip the bottom edge up to meet the top lip and tuck the dough into itself.

Transfer the dough, seam side up into your prepared cloth-lined baskets. Proofing is the final stage of fermentation. Let the dough proof in the baskets 2-4 hours before baking, or put them in the refrigerator, covered, overnight for more flavor development.

## Baking the Bread.

Preheat the oven to 500F and put a 5-quart dutch oven in the oven with its lid. Once the oven (and the pan is hot), remove one basket from the fridge. Place a piece of parchment paper on a clean work surface. In one motion flip the basket over onto the parchment, aiming for the center. Gently peel away the kitchen cloth from the loaf. Using a very sharp knife, score the top of the bread.

Remove the dutch oven from the oven-be careful-it is very hot! Remove the lid from the pot, and very carefully lower the bread into the pot using the parchment paper on either side as an aid to guide the bread into the dutch oven. Cover the pot with its lid and bake for 20 minutes with the lid on. After 20 minutes, remove the lid and reduce the oven temperature to 450 F. Bake for another 20-25 minutes (I find it more like 30 minutes). Transfer to a cooling rack. Preheat the dutch oven/oven back to 500 F before cooking the second loaf.

Wait (if you can!) about 30 minutes before cutting the loaf, and a full 2 hours for its full flavor. Enjoy!!!