

Creating a Sourdough Starter

Poetry & Pies

total time: 5 minutes once a day

Ingredients & Equipment

- 40g flour (can use half all-purpose, half rye or whole wheat)
- 40g water, filtered and roughly 80F/27C
- 40g leftover starter (excludes day 1)
- [kitchen scale](#)
- [food thermometer](#)
- clean jar



Instructions

Day 1: In your jar, combine 40g flour with 40g warm water. Set lid loosely on top and store in an area roughly 70F/21C.

- I suggest up to half your flour be rye, whole wheat, or spelt. Rye will make a starter usable fastest.

*Current weight: 80g**

Day 2: Remove 40g starter. Stir in 40g warm water then 40g flour**. Set lid loosely on top and store in an area roughly 70F/21C.

- Again, up to half the flour can be rye, etc.
- Try to feed at roughly the same time each day.

*Current weight: 120g**

Days 3-5 (or so): Remove 80g starter. Stir in 40g warm water then 40g flour**. Set lid loosely on top and store in an area roughly 70F/21C.

- You may see some bubbles on day 3, but if not, **be patient**. It could take a few more days. Each day, you should see more and more bubbles.

- From here on out, we'll remove 80g each day so we have a remainder of 40g. That 40g will get combined with 40g flour and 40g water, to maintain our 1:1:1 ratio.
- Continue this step each day until it bubbles throughout, doubles in volume, and passes the float test (see below).
- Try to feed at roughly the same time each day.

*Current weight: 120g**

Maintenance: Once it passes the float test, you'll enter maintenance mode, which is basically the steps from day 3-5. However, soon you'll notice it's sunk back down quite a bit and lost most of its bubbles come feeding time. This means you either need to feed it twice a day or double the amount. Many bakers prefer the once a day method with extra food. To save on flour, you can begin to reserve 20g starter and feed it 40g flour and 40g water, for a ratio of 1:2:2.

Notes

1. **The Float test:** The float test is usually seen as the right of passage for a starter to be "ready." Once it's filled with bubbles that break the surface and is doubling within about 12 hours, take a small spoonful of starter and place it in a glass of room temperature water. If it floats, it's ready. If not, it needs more time. Keep checking it every day.

Be sure to weigh how much you removed for the float test. Otherwise, you won't know how much is left in the jar and how much *more* to remove to be left with your 40g starter come feeding time.

Note: you'll want to check it about 12 hours after feeding, as starters typically rise, hit a "peak" (which is when they're best for creating a bread dough), then sink back down. If you wait until 24 hours later, your starter may actually be ready but you've missed its "peak" time and it no longer floats.

2. *Removing 40g starter on day one and 80g each day after may leave you with slightly less than 40g (due to evaporation, some drying to the sides of the jar, or getting stuck to the spoon/[spatula](#) when mixing). This will not hurt your starter at all. To keep exact measurements, you can pour 40g starter into a second jar, but this is not necessary to do this daily. Instead, I prefer to pour the exact

amounts into a clean jar every 1-2 weeks when I make a loaf of bread. This ensures that I don't one day end up with next to no starter left in my jar.

3. **I prefer to mix the starter and water before adding flour. You are welcome to add and mix in any order you prefer, as long as it's mixed thoroughly.