



# Beginner's Guide to Sourdough

*Sow Peace With Every Stir*

Making sourdough is not as complicated as it seems. You need flour, water, salt, and patience. This guide will walk you through creating your own sourdough starter and baking your first loaf. You've got this.

## What You'll Need

- ◆ All-purpose flour (or bread flour)
- ◆ Filtered or tap water (room temperature)
- ◆ Sea salt
- ◆ A clean glass jar (quart-size works well)
- ◆ A kitchen scale (optional but helpful)
- ◆ A Dutch oven or covered baking vessel

**Pro Tip:** A Peace Dough Whisk makes mixing your dough SO much easier, but a sturdy wooden spoon works too.

## Part 1: Creating Your Starter

- 1 Mix 50g flour + 50g water in your jar. Stir well. Cover loosely (it needs air). Label it with today's date.
- 2 Wait 24 hours. You might see bubbles or separation. That's normal.
- 3 Discard half the mixture (about 50g). Feed it again: 50g flour + 50g water. Stir well.
- 4 Repeat daily: discard half, feed with 50g flour + 50g water. This is now your routine.
- 5 By day 5-7, your starter should be doubling in size within 4-8 hours of feeding. It's ready to bake with.

**Name Your Starter:** We named ours *Dophelia* (because Taylor Swift). Give yours a name. You're about to become very close.

## Part 2: Your First Loaf

**Ingredients:** 500g bread flour, 350g water, 100g active starter (fed 4-8 hours prior), 10g salt

- 1 Mix flour and water. Let it rest 30 minutes (this is called autolyse).
- 2 Add active starter and salt. Mix until no dry flour remains. Your Peace Dough Whisk is perfect for this.
- 3 Bulk fermentation: Let dough rest 4-5 hours at room temperature. Do 4-6 sets of stretch-and-folds every 30 minutes for the first 2 hours.
- 4 Shape the dough. Place seam-side up in a floured banneton or bowl lined with a kitchen towel.
- 5 Cold proof: Refrigerate 8-16 hours (overnight is easiest).
- 6 Bake: Preheat Dutch oven to 450°F. Score dough, bake covered 20 minutes, then uncovered 25-30 minutes until deep golden brown.
- 7 Cool completely on a wire rack before slicing (this matters more than you think).

### Timeline for Your First Loaf:

#### Morning:

Feed your starter. It should be bubbly and doubled by afternoon.

#### Afternoon:

Mix dough. Let it bulk ferment 4-5 hours.

#### Evening:

Shape and place in fridge overnight.

#### Next Morning:

Bake. Your house will smell incredible. Your bread will be amazing.

## Daily Starter Maintenance

Once your starter is ready, you feed it daily (or keep it in the fridge and feed it weekly). That's it. Really.

**Optional but Highly Recommended:** Sing to your starter when you feed it. Taylor Swift songs work great. Your bread will be better. Science might not back this up, but your kid will insist it's true, and honestly, he's right.

## Common Questions

**My starter isn't bubbling yet.** Keep going. It can take 7-10 days for a new starter to get really active. Patience is part of the process.

**Can I bake if my starter isn't doubling perfectly?** Yes. Look for signs of life (bubbles, rise, smell) rather than perfection.

**What if my bread is dense?** It might need more fermentation time or a warmer space. Sourdough teaches through experience.

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You can do this. Your starter believes in you.