

How to Make a Sourdough Starter

Below you'll find my schedule when starting your sourdough starter from scratch. No matter which flour type you choose, the measurements and instructions are the same.

Flour Types

All-purpose or Bread flour (unbleached organic is preferred)

Whole wheat

Fresh ground hard wheat

Einkorn

Spelt

Rye (it's best to do a mixture of rye as it has a strong flavor and lower gluten content)

Gluten-Free Flours

Rice (brown or white)

Buckwheat

Oat

Quinoa

Sorghum

Starter Amounts

1/4 cup flour (30 grams)

2 Tablespoons water (30 grams)

At each feeding you'll use 1/4 cup (4 Tablespoons) or 30 grams of flour and 2 Tablespoons water (30 grams). Your goal is a thick, pancake like batter consistency.

Try to keep your feedings 12 hours apart, but don't stress or set a timer. Twice a day is ideal to keep your new *lactobacilli* bacteria and yeast fed where they can multiply to establish your colony.

Why You MUST Discard

Don't skip the discard, this is important during this stage and means you'll use less flour throughout the first week. The *lactobacilli* aren't established and can't sustain the full amount of flour and water if you don't discard.

You can use it in regular recipes that call for flour and water (it's not a starter yet so not as sourdough), add it to your compost pile, feed it to your livestock, or place in the trash. DON'T put it down your sink unless you want to call a plumber.

Best temperatures for your starter is 70 to 85° Fahrenheit. Our house cools down between 65 to 60° F overnight as the wood stove cools and then is back in the low to mid 70's during the day and evening.

If you're seeing good bubble action, don't worry if your temperatures dips. If your house is colder, you can place your starter near a heat source (not on it, we don't want to cook it) or in the oven with the light on and the oven door cracked.

Warm water, around 65 to 70° F is ideal. If your house is on the cool side, you can increase the water temperature to 80 to 85° F.

Signs your starter is active:

- Bubbles on the sides of the jar
- Bubbles on the top of the jar
- Domed on top a few hours after feeding
- Liquid on the top (hooch) as you come due for the next feeding



Starter Feeding Schedule and Routine Day 1 through 5

Am feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Pm feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

You may start to see a bubble or two!

Day 2

Am feeding= Discard $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount of your starter (this is very important to establish your starter with a healthy colony). Add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Pm feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Day 3

Am feeding= Discard $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount of your starter. Add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Pm feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

You should be seeing quite a bit of bubble action now! Some starter will even double at this point BUT it's not ready for bread. If your starter is extremely bubbly right now, don't be alarmed if at day 5 or beyond it suddenly stops being so bubbly, this is normal for a young starter.

Day 4

Am feeding= Discard $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount of your starter. Add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Pm feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Day 5

Am feeding= Discard $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount of your starter. Add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Pm feeding= add equal flour and water and stir until well combined, scrape down side of jar and bottom.

Notes: even if you don't see signs on day's 1 and 2, continue with the feeding routine and have patience.

Your starter will likely smell yeasty, sour, tangy and or even like alcohol in the beginning stages.

You now have an active but young starter and can begin using it in non-rising sourdough recipes like pancakes, waffles, muffins, quick breads (this [chocolate sourdough bread](#) is delicious), crackers, and cakes.

Day 6 through 28

At this point you can continue along with the twice day feeding amounts OR use the alternate once a day feeding.

Alternate once a day feeding is 1/2 cup flour (60 grams) and 1/4 cup water (60 grams). This can be used once your starter is bubbly and active. If you feel its sluggish, stay at the twice a day feedings and amounts.

Once your starter is 4 weeks old, it will likely show consistent signs of doubling a few hours after feeding and be ready to try in bread recipes.

