

Sourdough Starter 101

Creating a sourdough starter from scratch is a rewarding and simple process that requires just a few basic ingredients. Follow these steps to make your own sourdough starter:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (unbleached, organic)
- 1 cup filtered water (ideally around 75-80°F or 24-27°C)
- A medium-sized glass with a loose-fitting lid
- Tea Towels
- Stirring utensil (wooden or plastic, avoid metal)

Day 1:

Initial Mixing:

Combine one cup of flour with an equal amount of filtered water in a bowl. Stir vigorously, making sure to scrape down the sides and incorporate all ingredients. The mixture should form a thick batter.

Cover and Allow Rest:

Place a clean tea towel over the bowl and set it aside. Allow the mixture to sit undisturbed for a period of 24 hours.

Day 2:

Discard and Repeat:

Discard half of the mixture and follow the same procedure. Add one cup of flour and one cup of water, stirring vigorously to achieve a smooth consistency.

Cover and Rest:

Cover the bowl with the tea towel and let it rest for another 24 hours.

Day 3-5:

Repeat Day 2 Instructions:

Continue following the day two instructions for days three, four, and five. Discard half of the mixture, add one cup of flour, one cup of water, stir vigorously, cover the bowl, and let it rest for 24 hours each day.

Day 6-7:

Increased Feeding Frequency:

On days six and seven, repeat the same process as day two but feed the starter every 12 hours instead of every 24. Discard half of the mixture, add one cup of flour, one cup of water, stir vigorously, and cover. Repeat every 12 hours.

Day 7:

Assess Fermentation:

By day seven, your sourdough starter should show sufficient beneficial bacteria and yeast presence, evidenced by bubbling and doubling in size after each feeding.

Ready for Baking:

At this stage, your starter is prepared for use in baking sourdough bread or other fermented treats like pancakes and English muffins.

Tips:

- It may take longer than 7 days to get to a very active point with your starter. Don't worry, just keep feeding/discarding every 12 hours. My first starter took about 2 weeks to become active.
- Pay close attention to the bubbling and size increase; these are indicative of active fermentation.
- Maintain a consistent feeding schedule to foster a healthy and dynamic sourdough starter.
- Adjust the feeding schedule if your surroundings are cooler, as fermentation may take longer.
- **Explore Different Recipes: Check out www.thesourdoughartisan.com!**

By following these steps, you'll soon have a lively sourdough starter, adding a delightful touch to your baking endeavors. Enjoy the fascinating journey into the world of natural fermentation!

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