

Sourdough bread

Get your culture bubbling

If your culture doesn't have bubbles through it, take it out of the fridge 3 – 12 hours before you do step 1. Feed it with a couple of spoons of flour and a dash of water. Stir and leave at room temperature. Follow the recipe below for two loaves.

- 1. Feed the culture:** Place the sourdough culture into a large ceramic bowl and add:
4 cups of lukewarm water (without chlorine)
4 ½ cups of wholemeal flour
Stir. Cover and leave in a warm place for 6-12 hours, until the culture has bubbles through it.
- 2. Save some culture and make loaves:**
Scoop out some culture and place in a jar. Store this in the fridge for the next batch.
Oil two bread tins.
Add flour to the bubbly culture. Add as much flour as you can comfortably stir.
Spoon the dough into the bread tins. Cover and leave in a warm place to rise for 4-10 hours. (Cooler place = slower rise + more sourness, warmer place = faster rise.)
- 3. Bake the bread:** Pre-heat the oven to 190-210 degrees C.
Place tins in the hot oven and bake for 30-40 mins.
- 4. Eat the bread!**
Remove from tins and check they are cooked through. Tap along the base, listening for an even, hollow sound. Look at the base, looking for an even, golden brown colour.
Wait at least 10 minutes before slicing (it is hard to resist!), and enjoy!

Tips:

- Don't use metal implements or bowls with sourdough.
- Use water *without* chlorine in it, as this kills living micro-organisms. Use filtered water, tank water, or tap water that has been out of the tap for a few hours or overnight.
- The colder the environment, the longer it will take to rise. If you need to speed it up, put a warm hot water bottle near the bread tins, or sit jars of hot water nearby.
- You can add other tasty ingredients at step 2. Try: nuts and seeds, malt, tamari, salt, dried fruit and spices, buckwheat, cumin seeds, caraway seeds, herbs, garlic, whatever!
- Spelt, rye and khorasan flour can be used, as well as wheat.

Timing - Try one of these combinations:

Feed the culture	Save culture, make loaves	Bake bread
evening →	morning →	afternoon
lunchtime →	evening →	morning
early morning →	lunchtime →	evening (warm places)

To start a culture (if you don't have any):

Place wholemeal flour and lukewarm water (1 cup of each) in a large jar with a wide mouth. Stir. Cover the jar with mesh. Leave at room temperature and stir daily until small bubbles appear (about 7 - 10 days). You have now caught some wild yeast and bacteria that will help you make bread!

Feed your culture to keep it alive

If you are keeping your culture in the fridge, feed it once a week with a spoonful of flour and a dash of water. If you keep it at room temperature, feed it daily.