

Sourdough

A Speed Course of Care

By Kathy Stewart

Congratulations, you brought home a jar of sourdough starter! Now what? Take the lid off and put the cloth square over the jar and secure with a rubber band. It needs to be able to breathe while it sits on your counter and adjusts to its new home.

After it's been at your home for a couple hours, if you see that there are bubbles in the jar and it has grown in size, its time to feed it for the first time.

1. Empty jar into a bowl
2. Measure 4 tablespoons or 2 ounces of your starter and put back in the jar
3. Add 4 tablespoons or 2 ounces of all purpose flour into the jar. I use King Arthurs brand all purpose flour.
4. Add 4 tablespoons or 2 ounces of warm bottled or well water. Chlorinated city water will kill all the good yeasts and bacteria in your starter and it will die. A very sad event.
5. Give it a good mix, place clothe back on jar and let sit on counter. Please note, I don't use a clothe but a plastic



lid that doesn't fit tightly. When it has almost doubled in size, place the lid back on it and put in the fridge until you want to use it again. If it hasn't doubled in size, feed it again following the above steps. If it developed a layer of grey liquid while resting in the fridge, don't despair. That liquid on top is normal and even has a name! Its called hooch, just stir it into your starter and feed as described above.



Just fed



After 4 hours

Yay! You just fed your sourdough starter for the first time, you are now on your way to sourdough heaven!

Now that you have fed your starter, you have some unused starter in your bowl, that is your discard. It can be used to create many yummy things.....pancakes, waffles, pizza dough, brownies, biscuits, cake, cookies, bread.....you get the picture. There are many recipes online that use sourdough discard.

Here are a few things that I do with mine:

1. Pancakes – add 1 egg, 2 Tablespoons of flour, pinch of baking soda and a pinch of salt. Stir it up, if its to thick add a splash of milk or two. Cook as you normally would for pancakes
2. Waffles – almost the same as pancakes, but separate the eggs and beat egg whites until stiff, mix yolks into your batter then fold the stiff egg whites into the batter.
3. Pizza Dough – into the bowl of a stand mixer use the dough hook, add your starter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil and 1 teaspoon of salt. Add about ½ cup bread flour and adding more flour or so water to develop your dough. When its done kneading, let rest for 30 minutes. Shape into your preferred pizza shape, spray or brush the dough with oil, add toppings and bake at 435 for 12 – 15 minutes. It's done when the cheese is melted and bubbly.

Sometimes I will take my discard and feed it equal parts water and flour (I guesstimate, sorry) then let it sit for a couple hours until it is a bubbly bowl of active sourdough starter. In doing this I am increasing the amount of starter I have to work with. I will empty it into my mixer bowl with the dough hook attached along with olive oil, powdered milk(about 1 tablespoon) and salt and slowly add bread flour until I have a nice ball of dough (I can touch it and it isn't sticking to me, think same as yeast bread) that I then put in a greased bowl, turn it over (the dough so it is covered with oil on both sides) cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it rise until doubled in size. Carefully turn out on a piece of parchment paper which is on a baking sheet. Take a sharp knife and make a cut down the middle of your dough about 1\4 to 1\2 inch deep, quickly, you don't want to pull at the dough. Place in a preheated 375 oven and bake about 20 - 25 minutes. Its done when it sounds hollow when you knock on the bottom of your loaf. Wrap in a slightly damp tea towel until it has completely cooled down. Best if overnight, but I understand if you can't wait. It will slice nicer, though if it has totally cooled down. Wrapping your bread in the towel will keep your bread crust softer and will also serve as a protective wrap for your bread as you eat it. If it lasts that long. Hee hee.

If you have decided you are brave and want to try a soft sandwich bread this is a link to the recipe I like for that

<https://www.thepperfectloaf.com/pain-de-mie/>