

HOW TO BAKE BREAD (AUSTRIAN / GERMAN STYLE)

The bread you will bake is a typical "farmer's bread" like we make here in Austria and in the southern regions of Germany.

The instructions in this pdf are minimal.

In this video I explain each step in great detail:

<https://youtu.be/iya9k1CKBMQ>



Before you start baking, please note:

- All the times are estimates only and may vary. Please follow the tips I give you in the video (e.g. correct consistency, poking test, knocking test, etc.).
- I always measure in grams and have used the following conversions: 100 g water = 1/2 cup, 125 g flour = 1 cup. The measurements may vary depending on the ingredients, e.g. the type of flour used. Please check that the dough has the right consistency (as I show in the video) and adjust the ingredients if necessary.
- The water you use should be of drinking water quality.
- Please make sure the sourdough is good for eating (no mould, extreme smell etc.). When in doubt, start over with a new sourdough.
- And do not forget: If you have any questions or problems, feel free to ask them in the comments. I will try to help as much as I can. :)

Start the sourdough

Day 1: 50 g (0,11 lbs or 1/4 cup) water + 50 g (0,11 lbs or 1/3 cup) rye flour

Day 2: Add 50 g water + 50 g flour

Day 3: Add 50 g water + 50 g flour

Day 4: Add 50 g water + 50 g flour

Day 5: Starter is ready

Take care of your sourdough

If you bake every 7 to 10 days, you do not need to do anything else. Just take out some of the sourdough after it has matured (before starting the bread dough) and put it in the fridge to store it for the next time.

If you are not baking any more bread in the next 7 to 10 days, you will need to feed your sourdough or it will die.

To feed your sourdough, take a generous tablespoon of the starter, mix it with 50 g (rye) flour and 50 g water. Leave it outside for about 6 hours and then put it back in the fridge.

Learn the basics: Yeast Bread

- 500 g (1,1 lbs or 4 cups) wheat flour.
 - 320 g (0,7 lbs or 1 1/2 cups) water (drinking quality)
 - 15 g (0,033 lbs or 1 TBSP) salt
 - 2 g (0,0044 lbs or 1 TSP) dry yeast or, 5 g (0,011 lbs or 2 TSP) fresh yeast)
1. Mix water and flour into a dough and let it rest for 60 to 90 minutes.
 2. Add yeast and salt and knead for 15 minutes.
 3. Leave the dough to rise for 2 hours or until it has almost doubled in size. Fold the dough every 30 minutes.
 4. Shape into a loaf.
 5. Second rise: One hour or until the dough has almost doubled in size (do the poking test!).
 6. Preheat the oven and baking tray to 250 °C (475 °F).
 7. Bake at 250 °C (475 °F) for 15 minutes. Then reduce the temperature to 220 °C and bake the bread for another 30 to 35 minutes (do the knocking test!).

Masterclass: Sourdough Bread

Make an activated sourdough starter:

- 100 g (0,22 lbs or 3/4 cup) rye flour
- 100 g (0,22 lbs or 1/2 cup) water
- 1 generous tablespoon full of your sourdough

Mix it and let it rest at room temperature for 6 to 8 hours.

Remove a large spoonful of sourdough and keep it for the next baking (keep it in the fridge until the next baking, do not forget to feed it if you do not use it regularly, see my tips on how to keep your sourdough alive).

Dough:

- Activated sourdough starter
- 300 g (0,66 lbs or 2 1/3 cups) rye flour
- 200 g (0,44 lbs or 1 2/3 cups) wheat flour
- 15 g (0,033 lbs or 1 TBSP) salt
- 300 g (0,66 lbs or 1 1/2 cups) lukewarm water
- Optional: Yeast

1. Add all the ingredients and knead for 5 minutes.
2. Cover the bowl and leave the dough to rise at room temperature for about two hours or until doubled. If you have not added yeast, it may take two or three times as long if your starter is very weak.
3. Shape the loaf and place it in a bowl (or proofing basket).
4. Let it rise for 30 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven and the baking tray to 250 °C (475 °F).
6. Bake at 250 °C (475°F) for 20 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 220 °C (425°F) and bake for another 30-35 minutes.

Bonus Recipe: Sourdough Crackers

If you do not bake regularly, you need to feed your sourdough (see video). In this case, you will have some sourdough leftovers. If you do not want to throw it away, here is my favourite recipe to use up the sourdough leftovers:

- Sourdough leftovers
- 1TBSP soft butter
- Salt
- Some flour (depends on the amount of sourdough used)

Mix butter, a pinch of salt, the sourdough and add as much flour as you need until it forms a dough. Roll it out and cut it into squares. If you like, you can spray some water on it and add sesame seeds or herbs (like oregano or rosemary).

Bake at 180°C (350°F) for about 20 - 25 minutes.

PS: In the crackers, the sourdough serves as a flavour enhancer, which is why I skip the rising process.