

My adaptation of Claire's recipe written for one loaf in a way that I can understand it.

by Julie Fergus

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Get the starter reactivated

- 1. Feed your starter (refreshing).** In the morning, three days before you plan to serve your bread, pull your starter from the refrigerator and decant 10 grams of it into a clean, clear container. Return any remaining starter to the refrigerator for future use. Stir in 60 grams of room-temperature tap water until the starter is evenly dispersed, then stir in 60 grams of white flour until you have a smooth paste. (I used the full amount of starter I had and added 60 and 60 and then pulled from that to add to the autolyze)
- 2. Cover the container, and let sit at room temperature** until it has at least doubled in volume and its surface teems with sudsy bubbles, 10 to 12 hours, depending on your kitchen's temperature.
- 3. Feed your starter a second time.** Once the starter has doubled in size (the evening of the first day), discard all but 20 grams of starter. To the 10 grams of starter, add 60 grams of water, then mix and incorporate another 60 grams of white flour. Cover and set aside at room temperature to be used in your dough the next day.

Getting the dough ready

- 1. Mix together flour and water and let sit (autolyse).** Early on the second day, weigh 400 grams of white bread flour and 100 grams of whole-wheat a large mixing bowl. Mix to combine.

Weigh out 375 grams of lukewarm tap water (about 90 degrees) and add to the flours. Mix gently with a flexible bench scraper until all the flours are hydrated and no dry spots remain. Cover with a damp dish towel, and let sit at least 30 minutes while you wait until your starter is ready.
- 2. Make sure the starter is ready to use (perform a float test).**
- 3. Combine the autolyse and starter.** Add 100 grams of ripe starter to the bowl with the flour-water mixture.
- 4. Assess texture and add salt.** At this point, the dough should be wet but also extremely extensible (having the ability to stretch without snapping back). Sprinkle 10 grams salt and 10 grams of water across the dough, and pinch, as before, to incorporate. Cover with a damp towel and let sit for 10 minutes.
- 5. Mix the dough.** Slide a wet hand down along the inside of the bowl and underneath the dough. Grasp a handful and stretch it upward until you feel resistance, then fold it back onto the dough mass. Repeat this motion continuously for 10 minutes, rotating the bowl about 90

degrees each time. As you work the dough, it will progress from very slack and sticky to smoother and more elastic.

6. Prepare for the dough's first rise (bulk fermentation). Mark where the dough hits the side of the bowl with a piece of tape. Dough should be 76 to 80 degrees. Cover the dough with a damp towel and let sit for 60 minutes.

7. Fold the dough. Using a wet hand and the same mixing motion as Step 5, but with a gentler touch to avoid knocking out any gas, perform four folds, making a full rotation of the bowl. Cover the bowl, wait 1 hour, then perform the same series of four folds. Cover and repeat every 60 minutes, until the dough feels pillowy and filled with air, which can take at least 3 hours and as many as 7. Each time you fold the dough, it should feel lighter and sit higher in the bowl.

8. Shape dough for the first time (pre-shaping). Clear and lightly flour a work surface. Gently turn out the dough, letting its weight coax it out of the bowl and loosening the sides with the bench scraper. Using floured hands and working with the dough, gently pull all the edges of the dough toward the center to create a round, tidy packet. Use a bench scraper to turn the loose ball of dough over so it rests seam-side down. Let dough rest, covered, on the work surface for 20 minutes.

9. Prepare the shaping bowl. As dough rests, line mixing bowl with clean kitchen towel. Dust the interiors of the baskets generously with the flour using a sieve. Set aside.

10. Shape the dough a last time (final shaping). Uncover dough and lightly dust the top with the flour. In one decisive motion, use the bench scraper to lift and turn the dough over floured-side down. Slide your fingertips beneath the dough and stretch it gently into a square shape.

Fold the left side of the dough inward toward the center, then fold the right side inward and overtop of the left fold. Starting at the end closest to you, roll the dough away from you into a bulky spiral.

Let the dough sit for a minute or two on its seam to help it seal, then use a bench scraper to lift up the dough and place it seam-side up in one of the prepared baskets. Lightly dust the exposed part of the dough with more of the flour, and cover with a kitchen towel.

11. Let the shaped dough rise in towel lined bowl (proofing). Rest loaf at room temperature, checking periodically, until the surface of the dough has settled and the entire loaf has slightly increased in volume, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

12. Check if dough is proofed (the poke test). Press a floured finger about 1/2 inch into the dough. If the dough springs back immediately, it needs more time — check again every 20 minutes. But, if it springs back slowly and a slight impression remains, the dough is proofed.

13. Chill the dough. Once the dough passes the poke test, cover the baskets with plastic wrap and transfer to the refrigerator. Chill overnight and up to two days before baking. The longer the dough spends in the refrigerator, the tangier the final bread will taste.

Bake

1. Prepare the oven. About an hour before baking, arrange a rack in the lower third of your oven and place a large, uncovered Dutch oven inside. Heat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. Prepare the dough. Remove loaf from the refrigerator and uncover. Lightly dust the exposed dough with the flour, massaging it into the surface. Place a piece of parchment paper over the bowl, making sure the parchment is longer and wider than the basket by several inches. Invert the loaf onto the parchment paper. Slowly peel away the towel. Dust the rounded side of the dough with more of the flour, rubbing it into the surface to coat evenly.

3. Make a slash in the dough. Use a lame or a serrated knife to make a long, slightly off-center slash about 1/4-inch deep, angling the blade toward the midline of the loaf.

4. Bake the dough. Use the parchment paper to lower the loaf into the Dutch oven. Cover and bake for 20 minutes. Then, remove the lid and reduce the oven temperature to 450 degrees. Continue to bake the loaf uncovered until the surface is deeply browned all over, another 20 to 30 minutes. Test temp – should be 190 – 210 degrees. Cool loaf on a wire rack.

5. Cut and serve! Allow the bread to cool completely, for a few hours, before cutting into it. Whole loaves can be stored uncovered at room temperature for 1 day. Once cut, bread should be stored in paper bags at room temperature and will keep for 5 days or longer. After the second day, it benefits from light toasting.

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