
Simple Rye Sourdough Starter

Ingredients

Whole rye flour — preferably freshly milled or whole-grain rye

Water — room temperature, preferably non-chlorinated

A clean 500–750 mL jar

Method

Day 1

Mix:

- 50 g whole grain rye flour
- 50 g water

Stir thoroughly until there are no dry spots. The mixture should resemble a thick pancake batter.

Cover loosely with a lid—not airtight—and leave at room temperature, ideally around 21–25°C (70–77°F).

Day 2

You may see little or no activity. That's fine.

Add:

- 25 g rye flour
- 25 g water

Stir well and leave covered at room temperature.

Day 3

You may start seeing bubbles and notice a pleasantly sour, fruity or earthy smell.

Discard approximately half of the starter, leaving about 50 g.

Add:

- 25 g rye flour
- 25 g water

Mix well.



Days 4–7

Continue the same process every 24 hours:

Keep:

- 50 g starter

Add:

- 25 g rye flour
- 25 g water

If the starter becomes very active and rises substantially and then collapses before the 24 hours are up, you can begin feeding it twice a day.

Notes

When is it ready?

Your starter is ready to bake with when it:

- Consistently becomes bubbly after feeding
- Rises noticeably—ideally **doubles in volume**
- Has a pleasantly sour, fermented aroma
- Does this reliably over several feedings

This can take **5–10 days**, and sometimes longer. Don't worry if activity seems to disappear around days 3–5. This is a very common part of starter development: an initial population of microorganisms blooms and then changes as the more stable sourdough community establishes itself.

