
Sourdough Whole Grain Bread

Ingredients

Yield: makes 1 large loaf or 2 small loaves

For the Sourdough Levain: (make the night before)

- 2 tablespoons active (30 g) sourdough starter (see Method below)
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (130 g) warm water, at 100°F
- 1 cup (120 g) All Purpose Flour *or* 1 ¼ cups (120 g) Whole Grain Flour

For the Dough:

- 1 ⅓ cups plus 1 tbsp (345 g), cold water
- 4 ½ - 5 cups (576 g) freshly milled, whole grain flour – Hard White Wheat or a combination of whole grain flours such as Einkorn, Spelt, or Khorasan
- 2 teaspoons fine sea salt

Method

- The levain process begins on the assumption you have an active sourdough starter. The levain is the pre-ferment stage of the bread making process. You should have sourdough starter remaining after making the levain as this is what you will build on for future sourdough baking.
- **Make the sourdough levain:** In a medium bowl, mix the starter and water together until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Mix in the flour with a fork until the flour is absorbed. Cover and let stand at room temperature for 6 to 12 hours. The levain is ready to use when the surface is covered with large bubbles.
- **Make the bread:** In a large bowl, combine the levain and the water. Add the flour and sprinkle the salt on top. Mix with a stiff spatula until the flour is well absorbed. Cover the bowl with a plate and let stand for 15 minutes.



- **Turn the dough:** Lightly flour a work surface and, using a bowl scraper, transfer the dough to it. Turn the dough by stretching the dough into a rectangle, then folding in each corner to the center. Fold again in half, then transfer the dough back to the bowl and cover tightly with the plate. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes, then turn the dough again.
- **Transfer the dough** back to the bowl, but this time, cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise for 2 to 4 hours, or until it has risen by 30%. If you are using a new starter, you may let the dough rise for up to 10 hours until you see a rise. If the dough has risen and you do not have time to shape and bake the bread, you can place the dough in the refrigerator for up to 8 hours. If you have trouble with shaping, you may also let the dough rise, then refrigerate it for 1 hour before shaping. It is easier to shape the dough when it is cold.
- **Shape the loaf:** Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface. Spread the dough out to a rectangle, then fold in each long end to form a square. Pull up the edges of the dough at 1-inch intervals and press them tightly into the center to make a 6-inch round. Use the bowl scraper to turn the dough over so the seam side is on the counter. Flour your hands, then cup the dough and rotate it in a circular motion between your hands, applying downward pressure, until you have a tight round loaf. Dust the top of the loaf generously with flour.
- Heavily dust a 6-inch banneton basket with flour (or cornmeal) and invert the loaf into it. Cover the dough with a **linen couche** or clean tea towel. Let the loaf rise at room temperature for 45 to 90 minutes until it has expanded just past the rim of the basket and it shows a few bubbles, but is still a bit firm.
- Place a Dutch oven with the lid on in the oven. Preheat the oven to 500°F for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Remove the pot from the oven and take off the lid. Invert the loaf and shake it loose in the pot. Make four 1/4-inch deep slashes on top of the loaf in the



pattern of a square, making sure you don't get too close to the edges. Cover and place in the oven.

- Reduce the oven temperature to 475°F and bake for 20 minutes. Carefully remove the pot from the oven and remove the lid. Return the pot to the oven and bake uncovered for 20 minutes.
- Lift the loaf out with a metal spatula and transfer it to a wire rack. Let the bread cool for 2 hours before slicing. Store at room temperature for up to 3 days in an open plastic bag, or freeze for up to a month, then defrost at room temperature.

Notes

Recipe adapted from Jovial Foods

This recipe is also good for whole grain pizza dough.

