

Easy Sourdough Sandwich Bread

Ingredients

100 g (about 1/2 cup) active starter, see notes above

10 g (about 2.5 teaspoons) kosher salt

430 g water, (or less, see notes above) room temperature

512 g (4 cups) bread flour, such as King Arthur Flour

a few tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

room temperature butter, for greasing

Instructions

- 1) Mix the dough: Place the starter, salt, and water in a large bowl. Stir with a spatula to combine — it doesn't have to be uniformly mixed. Add the flour. Mix again until the flour is completely incorporated. If you have a straight-sided vessel, transfer the dough to it — it really helps monitor the rise and allows you to see the true growth in volume of the dough.
- 2) Perform one (or more) "folds": 30 minutes after you mix the dough, reach into the bowl and pull the dough up and into the center. Turn the bowl quarter turns and continue this pulling 8 to 10 times. See video for guidance. If time permits, repeat this "folding" step every 30 minutes for the first two hours. (Note: even if you perform just 1 fold, your dough will be in good shape.)
- 3) Drizzle with a splash of olive oil and rub to coat. Cover bowl with a tea towel or bowl cover and set aside to rise at room temperature (70°F/21°C) for 4 to 18 hours — if it is super hot out or if you live in a humid environment, it may only take 4-6 hours. When the dough has nearly doubled in volume (or UPDATE: increased in volume by 50%, which is when I now end the bulk fermentation), it is ready. (Note: Do not use an oven with the light on for the bulk fermentation — it will be too warm. It is best to rely on visual cues (increasing in volume by 50% or doubling if you've had success with doubling) as opposed to time to determine when the bulk fermentation is done. A straight-sided vessel makes monitoring the bulk fermentation especially easy.)

4) When the dough has nearly doubled, grease a 10 x 5-inch loaf pan with butter (or nonstick spray). Drizzle dough with a few tablespoons of olive oil. Rub your hands with a little bit of oil to coat. Use your hand to release the dough from the sides of the vessel, being careful not to completely deflate the dough. [Video guidance here](#). Turn dough out onto a work surface. Quickly, shape the dough into a rectangle — I fold the dough envelope-style first; then I use a bench scraper to shape the dough into a rough rectangle. Transfer dough, seam-side down to prepared loaf pan and gently stretch into an oblong shape. (At this point, you can transfer the pan to the fridge if it makes sense with your schedule: rub the dough with oil and cover with a cloth bowl cover or plastic wrap. Transfer to the fridge will the next day. Then proceed with the recipe.)

5) Leave alone for 5 to 6 hours or until dough begins reaching the rim of the pan — this may take less time when it is very warm out. Do be patient with this second rise: to get good height, the dough should be near the rim of the pan before you transfer it to the oven.

6) Heat oven to 425°F. Transfer pan to the oven and bake for about 20 minutes. Reduce heat to 375°F. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes more or until golden all around. If you have an instant read thermometer, it should register 206-210°F or so before removing. Remove pan from oven and turn bread out onto a cooling rack. Cool at least 30 minutes before slicing.