

Sourdough Plain White

Sourdough starter, using a strong white bread flour:

Day 1 - 50g flour + 50g tepid water - mix together and leave in jar/bowl with a cover but not airtight.

Day 2 - Repeat Day 1

Day 3 - Repeat Day 1

Day 4 - Repeat Day 1

Day 5 - I would leave as it is on the worktop, out of sun in a cool place. It should have started to smell like brewers yeast.

Day 6 - ready to use. This is your starter and you will add to this now forever! Take care of it and when you aren't using store in the fridge covered with clingfilm or in a jar with lid. But do check on it and don't just forget about it! Fridgeing it means it slows down the ferment process...it doesn't "kill" it.

To make a loaf:

1. 150g starter + 150g flour + 150g tepid water...mix all together and leave in the bowl for a few hours to "activate". I leave overnight and it goes all bubbly and stringy.
2. In a clean bowl place 150g of the above "new starter" + 300g water - whisk gently to break up the starter.
3. Then add 500g of strong white bread flour. (You can add a little rye or spelt if you wish but total of 500g). Mix together as best you can and it looks like there isn't enough water but there is, just leave it for 20 - 60mins.
4. Then sprinkle on salt to taste...I use 11g, some I know use 5g to 20g! Dip fingers in water and then pull and fold salt in. Take dough from edge, pull into centre, turn bowl, full to centre...etc until you have incorporated all the salt. It isn't like proper kneading you are being relatively gentle but you have started to incorporate more air. Do this just for 1 min...it will have become slightly elastic and smoother. Leave with the rough side down for 30 mins and then repeat twice more.
5. Leave now, covered in a clean bowl, with a tiny bit of oil to stop it sticking, for 3 hours.
6. Turn out onto a slightly floured worktop. As I prefer smaller loaves as I don't eat much bread, I will now cut the mixture in half to make two loaves.
7. Pull the dough into a rough rectangle shape, fold top edge to centre, bottom edge to centre, right side into centre and left side into centre. Mould into a round shape and leave for 15mins. Do for each loaf.
8. Pull again into a rectangle and do the folding. This next bit is fun as you turn and pull under to make the dough into a firm ball. Best to watch a video on YouTube (Patrick Ryan has some great videos and recipes on BBC Good Food) as there is a knack to it...what you are actually doing is bringing air into the bread. Once done, place smooth side down in a proving basket sprinkled with flour and then gently pull the top together in the centre as if you are sealing it.
9. Place in fridge overnight or until ready to bake.
10. Heat oven to 240C or 200Fan. Heat your cooking bowls in there.

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11. Turn out the loaf onto your hand, place onto piece of baking sheet. Score into design you want on top of loaf. Put into baking dish with lid on. Cook for 25mins - remove lid and cook for a further 5mins to brown.
12. Cool on a wire rack. Eat quickly!!!
13. They do freeze well for a month or so.

These are notes I made from my friend Helen - am sure there are lots of ways of doing it.