

REHYDRATE YOUR STARTER.

DAY 1

Rehydrate in a clean jar with a lid. (A quart mason canning jar works well) Cover with lid after each step, but never tighten. Combine your package of starter (25 grams) with 35g of water. (Not over 85°F). Mix vigorously. Cover with lid. This will be a wet, initial mix. Keep the mixture in a warm place. The optimal temperature is 78-80°F (25.5-27°C). Check starter every 4 hours or so and stir until all of the dried starter is hydrated and the mixture is a smooth, wet, pasty mix. This may take 4-8 hours.

Day 1 - First Feeding: Add 10g of flour and 10g of water to your starter. DO NOT discard any of the original mix! A popular flour mixture for starter maintenance is a 50/50 mix of bread flour or all purpose flour and a whole wheat or rye flour. I really like using rye.

DAY 2

Watch and wait. Check the starter mixture periodically on Day 2. If the water is separating from the starter, you can stir it. You should start to see bubbles forming on the top of the starter. This is the yeast re-activating, which is good. Monitor the starter throughout the day, you should see bubbles completely covering the top of the starter. Wait until these bubbles start shrinking in size and/or number. This indicates that the starter has reactivated and has consumed the first feeding of flour.

Day 2 - Feeding #2: When the bubbles have subsided, this indicates the initial flour feeding has been fully consumed. The starter may begin to smell vinegary. Feed the starter 20g flour and 20g water. DO NOT discard any of the original starter mixture!

DAY 3

Watch and wait. Watch the starter after the second feeding. The starter should be completely covered with bubbles. It may not rise because it is still a fairly wet mixture.

Day 3 - Feeding #3: When the bubbles have mostly subsided, feed the starter again with 20g flour and 20g water. DO NOT discard any of the original starter!

DAY 4

Watch for peak activity. By now, the starter should be thickening and rising after the third feeding. Wait for the starter to rise and peak. You can tell it has peaked with the starter starts falling. This is when the yeast is at optimal strength.

Day 4 - Feeding #4: DISCARD and feed. When the starter is indicating that it has peaked, discard all but 30g of starter, and add 30g flour and 30g water. This is a standard 1:1:1 feeding with equal parts retained starter, flour and water.

DAY 5 and beyond

Discard and feed. Continue daily 2/3s discard and a 1:1:1 feeding of the starter until you see it consistently rise and peak about 4-6 hours after feeding (at 78°F/25.5°C). At this point your starter should be back to normal strength and used for baking.