

Twice as Tasty

<http://www.twiceastasty.com>

The 2nd Annual Sourdough Giveaway

By Julie Laing

A sourdough starter wants to be loved—and has plenty of love to go around. That’s why I’m giving away sourdough starter every January through Twice as Tasty.

The starter you’ve received is a dehydrated portion of my own sourdough starter, which I was gifted in May 2014 and have been baking with regularly ever since. I keep a 100% hydration starter, meaning the culture is fed with equal parts water and flour by weight. All sourdough recipes on Twice as Tasty are designed for a 100% hydration culture. (In contrast, if you were to feed your starter with equal parts water and flour by volume, you would have a more liquidy, 166% hydration starter, because a cup of water weighs more than a cup of flour.)

I primarily feed my starter with Wheat Montana Natural White Flour, a locally sourced, non-GMO, chemical-free, all-purpose flour. For water, I use the unchlorinated, untreated water generated by the well on my property. I recommend feeding your starter with a similar all-purpose flour. For the liquid, avoid water with chlorine, chloramines, or fluoride; if you’re uncertain about what’s coming out your tap, buy a gallon of distilled water to get started. Using similar flour and water at my recommended ratios as you rehydrate will help you successfully activate your starter.

Once your starter is active and bubbly, you can change the hydration levels and flour types to suit your needs. I prefer to keep one starter that’s easy to use in many recipes, but some people maintain multiple starters with various flours and hydration levels. If you decide to go big, Sourdough.com is an excellent resource.

Here you’ll find the tools and instructions to help you rehydrate your dried starter. Visit TwiceAsTasty.com for basic starter care instructions and recipes that use sourdough starter.

Recommended Tools

The following tools will help you rehydrate and use your sourdough starter:

- **Quart jar with a screw-on ring:** I find quart-size glass jars are the easiest for storing sourdough starter, but you can use any nonreactive container for which you can create a breathable lid. If you don’t have a screw-on canning ring, a rubber band may do the trick.
- **Coffee filter or paper towel:** Unbleached coffee filters are easy, but you can use any breathable material that can be secured to your storage container.
- **Kitchen scale:** A scale is essential in my kitchen. Today’s kitchen scales are small, inexpensive, and easy to use. If you don’t have one, get one. You can use volume measurements in a pinch (60 grams come to about 1/4 cup of water and about 1/2 cup of flour), but they won’t be as accurate.

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Rehydrating Dried Sourdough Starter

These instructions assume you are starting to reactivate your starter in the morning and will be around for the first couple of hours, but you can simply shift the times to suit your schedule.

1. First thing in the morning, empty the bag of dried starter into a clean quart jar. Set the jar on a scale and pour in 60 grams of room-temperature, unchlorinated water; mix well. Stir occasionally over the next couple of hours until the chips break down.
2. With a fork, stir in 30 grams of all-purpose flour. Cover with a coffee filter and a screw-on lid, and leave the jar on the counter.
3. Around noon, stir in 30 grams each of water and flour. Cover and leave on the counter.
4. Before going to bed, stir in 60 grams each of water and flour; cover and let sit overnight.
5. In the morning, you may have a bubbly starter ready to use. If not, don't worry. Just keep feeding the culture with equal parts flour and water (by weight) every 12 hours or so until it wakes up. This could take several days, depending on the temperature of your home. See the Tips & Tricks for ways to keep your starter warm.
6. If your starter is alive and bubbly, continue to feed it twice daily with equal parts flour and water (by weight) until you have at least 520 grams of starter in your rehydration jar.
7. Once you have plenty of starter, set a clean quart jar on your scale and pour in 360 grams of starter. Feed it 30 grams each of water and flour. Stir, cover the jar with a coffee filter and a screw-on lid, and let it sit on the counter for 2 hours.
8. Pour any starter left in your rehydrating jar into a bowl. You should have about 150 grams ready to use. I recommend starting with [Sourdough Pancakes or Waffles](#).
9. Place the jar in the fridge. This is now your sourdough starter! Love it, use it, name it if you like. Take photos of it and your creations and email them to me at twiceastastyblog@gmail.com or share them on Instagram (tag them [@twiceastastyblog](#) and [#twiceastastyblog](#)). Most importantly, feed it when you use it, following the care instructions given [here](#).

Tips & Tricks

- Temperature can affect the speed at which your starter wakes up. If your house temperature is below 70°F and the starter seems sluggish, you may need to warm it. I simply set mine near my woodstove. You may be able to set it on a warm appliance, like atop a DVD player, or in a cold oven with the incandescent interior light turned on or a second jar of hot water next to it. Simply wrapping it in a towel keep the temperature steady overnight. If you give the starter a temperature boost, make sure it doesn't warm above 110°F; you risk killing the wild yeast.
- Most of us think "bread" when we think "sourdough," but it is more a process of baking than a specific baked good. Starting your sourdough adventures with pancakes or waffles will give you a feel for the culture and a tasty sample of its flavor. From there, moving on to pita or pizza will give you a feel for the fermented dough. This practice will also help ensure your starter is fully active by the time you bake your first loaf of bread.

I am gifting you my personal starter. I have tested the entire process at home, but don't be discouraged if your experience is different—we're all learning here! I welcome your feedback and questions. If you would rather receive fully active sourdough starter, [contact me](#) to schedule a [sourdough workshop](#); each participant receives a lively jar of starter to take home and use.