



Sourdough Bread

Recipe from *The Amish Cook at Home*,
by Lovina Eicher with Kevin Williams.



Makes 3 loaves

- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ cup olive oil*
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups warm water (105° to 115°F)*
- 6 cups bread flour
- 1 cup Sourdough Starter*
- 3 teaspoons butter, melted

Combine the sugar, oil, salt, water, flour, and starter in a large bowl. Stir to make a dough. Form the dough into a ball. Grease another large bowl. Put the dough in and turn to coat. Cover with waxed paper and let stand overnight. (Do not refrigerate.)

The next morning, punch the dough down and divide it into thirds. (If you are making Sourdough Cinnamon Rolls, punch the dough down and divide it in half.) Knead each part on a floured surface 8 to 10 times. Grease three 8½ by 4½ inch loaf pans and turn each loaf over in the pan to coat. Cover with waxed paper and let rise in the pans until it is just above the rims of the pans, 4 or 5 hours. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake the bread until the crust is nice and golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from the oven and brush each loaf with 1 teaspoon of the butter. Unmold and let cool on wire racks.

*Cook's note: Per modification in Sourdough Starter, if I use more of the starter, I typically reduce the volume of oil and water slightly, maintaining the same overall volume of liquid. Using 1½ cup starter, ¼ cup olive oil and 1 ¼ cup water seemed to work pretty well. Either way, it makes a seriously delicious bread! I've never gotten so many compliments, from men and women alike, on homemade bread.

Timing note: As you might guess, this recipe some scheduling to allow for all the risings, sittings and feedings. With my work schedule, I had to start things in time to either get up early and bake, or bake in the evening when I got home (or on a weekend).

A rough timeline for the two options is as follows, one for a work-week feed-and-bake that begins Tuesday night and concludes with a Thursday-morning bake, the other with mostly weekend feed-and-bake that begins Friday morning and ends Saturday afternoon:

Feed	Rest (5-12 hours)	Make dough	Rise	Shape bread/rolls	Rise (4-5 hours)	Bake
Before bed (Tuesday p.m.)	Overnight	Before work (Wednesday a.m.)	During day	Before bed (Wednesday p.m.)	Overnight	Before work (Thursday a.m.)
In the morning (Friday a.m.)	During the day	Before bed (Friday p.m.)	Overnight	In the morning (Saturday a.m.)	During the day	Midday/early afternoon