

How to Convert *Any* Recipe to Sourdough + 3 example recipes

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Any baking recipe can be converted to a sourdough recipe. There are a few different options depending on the type of recipe and your goals.

If Making a Yeasted Dough

To convert any yeasted dough into a sourdough recipe, subtract 50g of flour, 50g of liquid (water, milk, cream, etc.), and any yeast from the original recipe and replace it with 100G of active starter or discard. Mix all of your ingredients, as usual, doubling the original rising times (you want a minimum of 4hrs rising time. More is ok)

Notes:

- Leaving the salt out of the recipe for as long as possible will help with the fermentation process. Even just letting your dough sit for 20-30 minutes before adding the salt will help.
- If there is a “knock down” step, to knock out the gas, ignore it. That’s only for *commercial* yeast
- If it is a particularly large recipe, you can either keep the 100g starter and increase the proofing/fermentation time to accommodate the extra flour that needs to be fermented (example: waiting until the dough has doubled in volume), or you can increase the amount of starter you add. Typically, 100g of starter can replace up to 12g Active Dry Yeast or 9g Instant Yeast. If your recipe calls for more yeast you can divide the total yeast by either 12g or 9g, depending on the type of yeast called for, and then multiply that number by 100g for how much starter you need. 100g of starter is typically the sweet spot though.

Example Recipe: Sourdough Rosemary Focaccia

Ingredients:

- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ C. (350g) Bread flour
- 1 C. (142g) All Purpose (A.P.) flour (**originally 192g A.P. flour**)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ C. (10g) rosemary, fresh (5g if dried)
- 2 C. (424g) 110F water (**originally 474g**)
- 100g Sourdough starter (**replaces 12g Active Dry Yeast**)
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp (3.75g) salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ C. (47g) olive oil, plus more for drizzling and brushing
- Flakey sea salt for finishing

Equipment:

- Stand mixer with a dough hook
- Bowl scraper, optional
- Large bowl
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet
- Pastry brush

Directions:

1. In the bowl of your stand mixer, combine the flours and rosemary. Give it a gentle whisk (you can use your fingers) to get a homogenous mix, then add the water and starter to the four mixture. Stir until there are no more dry pockets of flour. Cover and let sit for 20-30 minutes.
2. After 20-30 minutes, add the salt to the dough and mix in the stand mixer on low (#1-2 on my kitchenaid) until combined. Increase the mixer speed to medium-high (#4-5 on my kitchenaid) and continue to mix until the dough forms a cohesive ball and starts to pull away from the sides, about 3 minutes.

3. Reduce mixer speed to low (#1-2) and slowly pour in the olive oil. Continue running the mixer on low until the oil has been incorporated into the dough, about 1-2 minutes, scraping down the sides of your bowl halfway through.
4. Liberally oil a large bowl and transfer the dough to this bowl, turning to coat the entire ball of dough in oil. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside to proof until doubled in size, about 4hrs (keep your dough *warm*. The ideal space is somewhere around 75F. You can also wrap your bowl of dough in towels to help retain heat if your kitchen is on the chilly side)
5. Once your dough has risen, preheat your oven to 400F for conventional ovens (or 375F for convection ovens, which will give a crispier top to your focaccia). Line your baking sheet with parchment paper and drizzle with more olive oil, spreading it around with your fingers for an even coating.
6. Transfer your dough to the now prepared baking sheet. Use your fingertips to gently press the dough into a 14×12 in rectangle. Drizzle with more olive oil and then use your fingertips to dimple the top of your dough (feel free to let that oil pool in the dimples!). Liberally sprinkle the top with flakey sea salt
7. Bake for 20-minutes, then rotate and bake for an additional 10-minutes. Remove from the oven and use a pastry brush to brush on additional olive oil. You can optionally sprinkle more flakey salt on top of the focaccia at this point. Allow to cool for 10-minutes before slicing your bread.

If Making a Chemically Leavened Dough

Chemically leavened doughs are any doughs that use chemicals, such as baking soda or baking powder, to create their rise. This includes pancakes, waffles, muffins, cookies, and the category of breads known as “Quick Breads”

You have two options when it comes to converting chemically leavened doughs.

Option 1 - Add Sourdough *flavor*

Just like the yeasted dough conversion, you are going to subtract both flour and liquid from the original recipe. But now the *minimum* subtraction is 50g of flour and 50g of liquid (water, milk, cream, etc.), with the ideal typically being around 115g of both flour and water and replacing it with 230g of starter or discard. Leave the chemical leaveners *in* the recipe. Follow the rest of the recipe as originally written.

This will give you a very quick option for getting sourdough *flavor* into your bakes since you are skipping the fermentation stage and relying solely on the chemical leaveners to create the rise.

Notes:

- For things like cookies, you can refrigerate the dough for a few hours (or up to a couple days) to not only get a better shape to your final cookie, but also increase the sourdough flavor (more time in the fridge = more sourdough flavor)
- If you are looking to increase the sourdough flavor even further, without increasing the time it takes to bake, simply replace more of the flour and liquid with more starter.
 - Eg. subtract 150g of *both* flour and liquid from the original recipe and replace it with 300g of starter for a stronger flavor without increasing the time.
- If you are converting a recipe that does not have an obvious liquid added (like cookies) you can remove egg whites (1 egg white is ~40g) or brown your butter (butter is 17–19% water), which cooks off the inherent liquid, to get to the desired reduction in liquid
 - 110g of unsalted butter (1 stick) has roughly 18.7 - 20.9g of water (or 2.3 - 2.6g of water per tablespoon)
 - Your math can be a little fuzzy for this and doesn't need to be perfect. Just get as close as you can. 10g too much liquid won't ruin your bake.

Example Recipe: Sourdough Pancakes (*fast*)

Ingredients:

- 2 C. (240g) All Purpose (A.P.) flour
- 1 tsp. (4.6g) Baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. (4.5g) kosher or flake salt (*avoid* table or iodized salt)
- 1 C. (230g) Sourdough discard
- 2 Tbsp. (28g) granulated sugar
- 2 C. (454g) buttermilk
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 4 Tbsp. (57g) butter, melted

Equipment:

- Large mixing bowl
- Griddle or nonstick pan
- Spatula

Directions:

1. In a large bowl mix your flour, baking soda, and salt. Add the sourdough discard, sugar, and buttermilk to the flour mixture and mix until just combined (there will be lumps. That's fine!)
2. In a separate bowl, whisk your eggs and melted butter before adding to the flour mixture. Stir until just combined.
3. Preheat your griddle or pan to 375F (the ideal temperature for pancakes is 375F)
 - a. Bonus: You can also preheat your oven to 250F and place a cooling rack on top of a baking sheet to store and crisp up your pancakes as you cook more of them. Cover pancakes with a kitchen towel and allow them space on the cooling rack without stacking them. This also works for waffles.
4. Lightly grease or butter your pan and then pour roughly 1/4C. Servings of batter onto your preheated pan. Cook until you just barely see bubbles starting to form on the surface of the pancakes, then flip and continue cooking until the bottom is golden brown.

Option 2 - Add Sourdough *fermentation*

Just like with Option 1, the *minimum* replacement is 100g (50g flour + 50g liquid), but the ideal is closer to 230g (115g flour + 115g liquid).

If it is a fairly dry, solid, dough (like cookies), follow the original directions and mix the ingredients as usual, reserving the sourdough starter/discard until you are told to mix all of your dry and wet ingredient together (add the starter to the wet ingredients, mix, then add the rest of the flour). Allow to sit for 4-hours at room temperature or overnight in the fridge (fridge preferred). Then bake following the original baking directions.

If it is a fairly wet, drippy, dough (like pancakes or waffles), mix your flour, starter, any sugar, and the main liquid (milk, buttermilk, heavy cream, etc.). Cover and allow to ferment for a minimum of 4 hours, and up to 12 at room temperature, or overnight in the fridge. After fermentation, follow the original directions and mix the ingredients as usual, adding your ferment to the eggs, oil, salt, chemical leaveners, etc. Leaving the chemical leaveners until the very last step before baking ensures you get the best rise.

This process takes longer, but will give you a very flavorful end product that is easier on digestion since the fermentation process was able to break down more of the gluten.

Notes: See notes in Option 1

Example Recipe: Sourdough Pancakes (*slow*)

Ingredients:

- 2 C. (240g) All Purpose (A.P.) flour
- 1 C. (230g) Sourdough discard
- 2 Tbsp. (28g) granulated sugar
- 2 C. (454g) buttermilk
- --- ^^This is the sourdough ferment
- All of the sourdough ferment from above
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 4 Tbsp. (57g) butter, melted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. (4.5g) kosher or flake salt (*avoid* table or iodized salt)
- 1 tsp. (4.6g) Baking soda

Equipment:

- Large mixing bowl
- Griddle or nonstick pan
- Spatula

Directions:

5. In a large bowl mix your flour, sourdough discard, sugar, and buttermilk until there are no more dry pockets. Cover and let rest at room temperature for 12hrs, or overnight (or place in the fridge overnight).
6. Preheat your griddle or pan to 375F (the ideal temperature for pancakes is 375F)
 - a. Bonus: You can also preheat your oven to 250F and place a cooling rack on top of a baking sheet to store and crisp up your pancakes as you cook more of them. Cover pancakes with a kitchen towel and allow them space on the cooling rack without stacking them. This also works for waffles.
7. In a separate bowl, whisk your eggs and melted butter before adding to the sourdough ferment. Stir until just combined.
8. Add the salt and baking soda to the sourdough ferment and stir until just combined.
9. Lightly grease or butter your pan and then pour roughly 1/4C. Servings of batter onto your preheated pan. Cook until you just barely see bubbles starting to form on the surface of the pancakes, then flip and continue cooking until the bottom is golden brown.