



Baking bread, recipe of the professional

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Translation: Kristin an Robert Rawlinson

Freshly baked sourdough bread is the culinary culmination of every meal. As a Master Baker it gives me great pleasure to provide you with a simple yet convincing recipe.

I had ample opportunity to pass on this recipe. Many men and women followed these instructions and also took part in my hands-on demonstrations. Up to now, everybody succeeded in baking tasty and attractive sourdough bread.

All ingredients, apart from one, are easily available in many countries.

It goes without saying that rye flour is crucial for baking tasty dark bread. In Turkey, and also in Tunisia, we were able to buy rye grain at a market stall where it is sold as chicken feed. For a small fee the trader had it milled at a nearby mill. If you are lucky enough to have German friends, invite them over and ask them to bring a few kilos of rye flour (Type 1150) along.

Wheat flour (Type 500) is usually available everywhere. If the situation gets really desperate you can replace it with well-ground semolina.

The one ingredient, however, that might pose a problem is the sourdough

If the rye flour content of your bread dough is higher than 20%, it needs added sourdough. The sourdough is necessary to turn the rye, by a process of fermentation, into a state that it can be baked.

Bread dough made from wheat flour, on the other hand, does not need any fermentation.

Of course you can cultivate your own sourdough and keep it in the fridge. However, after a few weeks foreign bacteria and spores will affect the sourdough and have a negative impact on its properties. Eventually this will render it unfit for its purpose.

As an experienced Master Baker I strongly recommend a baking aid of the trade. It is dried sourdough, called '**Backhilfsmittel (baking aid) Type "ST20"**'. Unlike conventional sourdough it does not need refrigeration and can be kept at least four years in a well sealed container. This hassle-free and convenient baking aid works like conventional sourdough. There will be no difference in the taste of the bread. In the contrary, bread baked with ST20 usually renders better results and a fuller, even more pleasant taste. As an added bonus the bread keeps longer!

ST20 is free from any chemicals, hassle-free and convenient. Presently it costs €7.00 per 500 gr. On average you need 10-30g per litre of water, so two or three kilograms last about two to three years. Please keep it well sealed without refrigeration! That way it will keep at least four years.

Since I published my bread recipe six years ago, many people have asked me whether I could get this special baking aid for them, as it is not available to the public.

That's why I have decided to buy a substantial amount and make it available to all connoisseurs of tasty bread all over the world.

If you would like to order ST20, please use the online order form (see below) or give me a call on (+49)2842 – 1220016. Online orders, however, would be preferable. That way both parties can print copies for their records.

The online order form also provides information on postage fees, terms of delivery etc.

Here is the new step-by-step Bread Recipe (January 2011):

Ingredients for 2 breads a 1kg:

1. 800gr bread flour or wholemeal flour (of which you take 200 -300gr for the yeast sponge).
2. 800gr rye flour **OR** 400g rye flour and 400g wholemeal flour.
3. 80gr fresh yeast **OR** 2 tablespoons of dried active yeast.
Fresh yeast is far more preferable to dried yeast. It is available at any bakery (even abroad) and can be stored in the fridge. From experience I know that, wrapped in tin-foil, it keeps for more than three months.
Important: If you use dried yeast, the preparation of a yeast sponge is essential!
4. 1 teaspoon of sugar (food for the yeast in the yeast sponge)
5. 18-20gr (about a heaped tablespoon) of “Backhilfsmittel ST20”
Important: The amount of sourdough to be used is proportional to the amount of rye flour in the bread dough. If you use less rye flour, you have to adjust the amount of sourdough or Backhilfsmittel ST20, respectively. You can calculate the amount by using the rule of three (see example below).
6. About 1 litre of warm water. Add it little by little while you are kneading the dough. Make sure the dough stays supple but firm. Not too soft!
7. 25gr salt (about a level tablespoon)
8. 2 tablespoons virgin oil, i.e walnut, thistle, or olive.
9. Optional:
100gr chopped walnuts. Alternatively 100gr hazelnuts, peanuts or pistachios, roasted in butter and crushed afterwards.

If you have to adjust the amount of ST20, here is an example for using the Rule of Three:

800gr rye = 20gr ST20

500gr rye = x

$x = 20 \cdot 500 / 800 \rightarrow x = 12.5\text{gr.}$ (up to 15gr, depending on the quality of the rye)

FACT SHEET:

- Sourdough is necessary to turn the rye, by a process of fermentation, into a state that it can be baked. The ph value has to be lowered to about 4.5.
Home grown sourdough always contains bacteria and yeast cultures from the surrounding air. ST20 is grown from about 6 types of fermentation bacteria, after that it is dried.
- If the situation gets really desperate, fermentation can be achieved by using the juice of 2 or 3 lemons or 2-3 tablespoons of vinegar. However, the bread is not as tasty in comparison to ‘proper’ sourdough bread.
- Yeast is necessary to make the bread dough rise. That’s why yeast cultures have to be added to the dough. Fresh yeast contains only natural ingredients. Further information is available on my website (see above).
- Rising and fermentation are two entirely different processes!

How to use ST20 (Basic Recipe)

| Rye Content in % | ST20 per kg of rye flour |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 100% whole grain | 50gr |
| 90% rye flour | 35gr |
| 80% rye flour | 30gr |
| 70% rye flour | 28gr |
| 60% rye flour | 25gr |
| 50% rye flour | 20gr |
| 40% rye flour | 18gr |
| 30% rye flour | 15gr |

Preparation of the Yeast Sponge

Important: If you use dried yeast, a yeast sponge is essential in order to activate the yeast!

- In a plastic-bowl, lightly mix about 300gr **wheat flour** (+/- 20%), 1tsp **sugar** (food for the yeast) and 2 tbslp **dried yeast** together.
- Slowly add warm water (ca. 30^o-35^oC), mixing it in with one hand, while the other one holds the bowl. Keep mixing the ingredients, slowly at first, then gradually faster, until you have thin, soft dough. Make sure the yeast is thoroughly dissolved.
- Now the yeast will spring to life.
- Leave the dough alone until it has reached twice its volume. This will take between 15 and 20min.
- Fresh yeast reacts a lot faster!

The Bread Dough – now we are getting serious!

- In a big round bowl lightly mix the remaining **flour (rye and wheat)**, **salt**, **ST20** and **oil** together.
- Add the risen, soft, thin **yeast sponge** and gently knead everything together. Removing the last bits of yeast sponge from the plastic bowl can be a bit messy, but here is a trick: take a bit of flour from the big round bowl, put it into the plastic-bowl and firmly scrape your hand along the inside of the bowl. This should remove the remaining yeast sponge.
- After you have kneaded everything together, gradually add lukewarm **water (ca. 25^o – max. 28^oC)**.
- **Important:** The temperature of the dough must not exceed 28^oC! It should be checked with a thermometer.

- Now it's time for a real work-out: Vigorously knead the dough in the bowl (keep rotating the bowl a bit at a time), until you have firm dough that feels a bit like, well, like wool. Altogether this should not take more than 5 minutes!
- Cover the dough with a cloth. It prevents the surface of the dough from drying out.
- Leave it well alone for 10 -20 min.
This "Teigruhe" (resting of the dough)) allows both the sourdough and the aroma to develop.
- While the dough is resting, take a baking-board and give it a good dusting with flour. Then remove the dough from its bowl (a plastic scraper is just ideal for the job) and put it onto the baking-board. While you are working with the dough it is a good idea to dust the palms of your hands with flour (just allow your palms to touch the baking-board every now and then). The dough also should get a light dusting with flour. All this prevents the dough from sticking to your hands and/or to the baking-board.
- Now lift one corner of the dough, fold it across the remaining dough and firmly press it down (don't be shy!). Do the same with the other three corners. Then repeat the procedure (don't forget to dust your hands with flour every now and then).

If you are wondering what this is all about: While the dough was resting, the yeast spores produced **carbon dioxide** which enabled the dough to rise. This carbon dioxide has to be removed in order to allow the both the sourdough and the yeast to develop as much **aroma** as possible. This happens by a process of fermentation in which ester and ethanol come into the game.

Once the carbon dioxide has been removed, **the yeast spores can feed again** and thus raise the dough even better. That's where all the pores in your bread come from.

- Optional: if you prefer your bread with nuts, divide the dough in half and work in the nuts.
- Then, even if you don't want nuts in your bread: **leave it alone for 5 minutes**.
- Now dust your hands again with flour and go back once more to the procedure of folding one corner of the dough over the remaining dough and then pressing it down firmly. Repeat with all three corners.
- Now divide the dough in half. Form two oval rolls and lower each of them into a greased baking tin. Cover with a cloth (i.e. tea towel).

Important Advice about Baking Tins

Choose simple tins without coating. As the baking tins are exposed to very high temperatures, the coating emits gases in the process.

I strongly recommend my professional baking tins. They are of superior quality and long lasting. For further information please visit my Homepage.

A hint from the trade: when you buy new baking tins, brush them with cooking oil and put them into the very hot oven for 15 minutes. Repeat this procedure. That way you prevent your future loaves from sticking to the tin.

Important: NEVER clean baking tins with water or put them into the dishwasher. Just wipe them clean after use.

- Heat up the oven – as **HOT** as possible! Minimum 220⁰C (Gas Mark 7), up to 280⁰C (Gas Mark 9).
- Whilst your oven is building up the desired temperature, keep a close eye on your loaves: as soon as they have about doubled their volume (this takes about 10 – 20 min), wet your hands and thoroughly **moisten the surface of the loaves** – don't soak them, though!
- Take a sharp kitchen knife and quickly make a **deep cut** lengthwise through the surface of the dough.
If the dough has risen a bit too much, make a few cross-shaped cuts (a pair of scissors will come handy for this job!)
- By now the oven should have reached the desired temperature (check by using an oven-thermometer).
Carefully put the tins in the oven – **if the risen dough gets knocked too hard, it will collapse!**
- Bake for **25 – 30** minutes.
- Now open the oven door and carefully turn the tins by 180⁰, so that the end of the tin which faced the back of the oven will now face the oven door. Then shut the oven door again.
- Have a look at your loaves:
If they have turned **slightly brown**, reduce the heat to about 20-30% lower, try it out.
If they still look quite yellow-ish, don't reduce the heat.
- Bake for another **30 minutes**.
- Once your loaves have turned dark brown, they are thoroughly baked! Thoroughly baked bread keeps longer and tastes better! Bear in mind: It's the **dark crust** that makes the taste, far more than the porous crumb!

Enjoy the mouth-watering taste of your own home-baked bread!

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Visit me on the Internet and get more recipes, information, videos, photos, and handy hints: www.Brotbacken-online.de

Backhilfsmittel ST20 – Ingredients:

rye sourdough (dried); acidifier citric acid; wheat flour; wheat gluten; acidifier sodium acetate; glucose; salt; vegetable fat; rye flour; lecithin; acidity regulators (lactic acid, acetic acid); flour treatment agents (ascorbic acid = vitamin C); natural enzymes.

Backhilfsmittel ST20 is a 100% natural product. Quantities of the individual ingredients can fluctuate.

Many thanks to Kristin an Robert Rawlinson (GB) for this professional translation.
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