

White Sourdough Boule

Created by Lovingly Artisan's baker, Aidan Monks.

A good white sourdough boule, or cob, depending how Francophile you are feeling, is a basic that you should perfect in your early days of making naturally leavened breads. It's the little nuance's that are so important and the difference between bread and great bread. If you use the same recipe with the same flour you will find you can concentrate on the method and the influence every little change has on your final boule. Once you find that perfect method for your kitchen, your oven, your style of making bread you can then move onto other flour and ingredients now being aware of their influence on your final creation.

For your leaven:

(make the leaven 24 hours before)

20 g mature starter/mother

40g water 30°C

20g strong white flour

20g wholemeal Rye

For the bread dough:

500g strong white bread flour

350g water at 30°C

10 g fine salt

100g leaven

1. Make the leaven by mixing together the mother, flour and warm water in a clean jam jar. Place the lid loosely on top and leave at room temperature 21-15°C for 24 hours.
2. To make the dough place the water and leaven into a mixing bowl and stir together till mixed. Now add the flour and with a scraper mix together taking care to scrape down the sides of the bowl at regular intervals until you get a smooth dough with no lumps.(you are only mixing the ingredients together at this point the kneading comes later). Now cover the bowl with a damp cloth and leave to stand for two hours to *Autolysis*. This time allows the natural enzymes in the flour to activate and make the job of kneading a lot easier.
3. Now add the salt and use your fingers to brake the dough apart and allow the salt to mix evenly throughout the dough
4. Kneading or more to be more descriptive stretching the dough. Firstly dip your hands into a jug of warm water. Then push your fingers between the

bowl and the dough and grasp the dough pulling it upwards feeling it stretch and tension. Then fold that stretched dough down towards the opposite side of the bowl. Turn the bowl slightly and repeat that process till you work your way around the bowl, doing this several times until you feel the dough start to tighten. Cover the bowl with the damp cloth and leave for 30min. After the 30 min repeat the process and do this another 4 times. You should now have a smooth silky dough. Cover and leave for two hours to ferment and grow.

5. Now prepare a bowl for the final proving of the Boule. Take a linen tea towel and liberally rub flour into the middle of the cloth in a large circle. Line a large bowl or basket with this cloth.
6. After two hours your dough should feel lighter to the touch and have more volume. It's time to shape the dough ready for its final prove. The method you used to stretch the dough (4) you now repeat for one final time. When you have a tight and springy ball of dough you then place it into the linen lined bowl and cover with a cloth.
7. You now prove the dough for an additional two hours at room temperature, 21-25', until its doubled in size. The dough is ready to bake when a finger gently pushed into the dough results in the indentation springing half way back. If the indentation springs back all the way the dough is not ready and needs more time.
8. For the best bake use a Dutch oven, or turn the boule out of the bowl onto an oiled oven baking sheet. Lightly dust with flour and score the bread with a very sharp serrated knife to allow it to spring properly in the oven. Bake at 180 'c for 40 to 45min