

Kimmy's Gluten Free Sourdough Starter

Recipe & Notes



Before you begin: Read through the notes. Plan to store your starter somewhere that maintains a steady temp between 75-82° F. Always add enough additional flour/water to make a thick pancake or brownie batter consistency.

Day 1 — Your Journey Begins!

- Mix 10g GF flour and 10g lukewarm filtered water. Stir well, add to jar and cover.
- Let sit 24 hours in a warm place (75-82°f).

Day 2 — Feed Only, No Discard

- Add 20g water & 20g GF flour to your starter and mix well.
- Let sit 24 hours.

Day 3 — Begin Discard and Feed (1:1:1 Ratio)

1:1:1 means equal parts by weight (starter:flour:water). You can use any amount as long as they are equal.

- Discard (throw away) all but 20g of your starter (see notes on page 2).
- Add 20g water & 20g GF flour to your starter and mix well.
- Add 20g flour. Mix until lumps are gone.
- Add more water or flour if needed to achieve a thick, slow pour consistency
- Mark the jar's fill level so you can judge the rise — a rubber band works great.

Note: Any rise this first week is known as "false rise". It looks great, is very exciting, but it is caused by bad bacteria. At some point between now and day 7 or 8 you may see a sudden lull in activity. This is normal and a great sign! It means that the bad bacteria are now weakened, and the good bacteria/yeast is prepping to take over! Be patient and don't panic.

Days 4–7 — Continue Discard and Feed Every 24 Hours

- Continue to follow the above feeding directions.
- If the stall in activity lasts more than 2 or 3 days, add a drop or two of apple juice, honey, syrup, etc...sugar makes the yeast active - like giving candy to a baby!

Days 8–14 — Continue Discard and Feed (Discard Now Usable!)

- Continue to follow the same feeding routines above.
- Start saving your "discard" in the refrigerator, to use in recipes. Remember discard replaces flour and hydration only - it is never a substitute for yeast!
- Observe carefully now - watch how much it rises (peaks), and how long it takes.
- The scent should start transitioning to yeasty/tangy. If it smells of acetone, increase the food slightly (for example, try 20g starter, 30g flour, 30g water).

Is It Ready?

Your starter is ready to use for baking once it is **at least 14 days old AND rising consistently within 8 hours of feeding for 3 consecutive days.**

After Day 14

Continue the discard and feed routine. Do not refrigerate until it reaches full strength — usually 6–8 weeks - OR until you are happy with the baking results.

Notes

Flour

- All references to "flour" mean gluten-free flour. Any GF grain flour works. Nut flours are not recommended — they lack enough natural yeast. Potato flour has worked for some, but is more difficult to establish and maintain.
- Brown rice flour often produces smaller rises in the starter (25–50% instead of doubling), but makes wonderful bread. Flour blends work fine — starches and gums do not hinder or kill the starter. It just reduces the amount of wild yeast per part - so it might take a bit longer to rise when making a recipe.
- The 1:1:1 ratio is always by weight. 1 cup of flour is not equal to 1 cup of water, so always use a kitchen scale.

Water

- Do not use city tap water. Chlorine and other chemicals can kill your starter.
- Do not use boiled, distilled, or reverse osmosis water. These processes kill minerals that your starter needs to thrive.
- Use filtered or bottled water only. Well water may be fine if it is chemical-free. Make sure bottled water does not contain sodium.

Equipment

- A pint jar is sufficient for this stage. Even if your starter doubles or triples, there will be room. Have larger quart jars ready once you start baking.
- Do NOT tighten the lid — gas buildup can cause the jar to explode. Keep it loosely covered. A coffee filter fastened with a rubber band or the jar ring works well; it allows airflow without drying out the top too much. Or just set the metal lid on top - do not screw down.
- Keep the jar clean and dry to prevent mold. Wipe down the sides after each feeding. You can mix in a separate bowl so the jar stays clean.

Temperature

- Aim to keep your starter between 75°F and 82°F for best results.
- Temperatures over 85°F can kill your starter.
- Cold temperatures will not kill it, but will slow progress significantly — it could take 2 months instead of 2 weeks. The slowdown in activity also opens up the possibility of mold setting in.

Tips to keep it warm:

- Start with warm (85°F) water and place in a warm jar (run jar under hot water first).
- Place in the oven or microwave with just the light on (will not work with LED lights). Some actually get too warm doing this, so be sure to monitor. You may need to crack the door open a bit to prevent overheating. Place a note on the oven, or painters tape over the controls, so no one preheats the oven with your starter in it!
- DIY proofing box: Place jar in an insulated bag or box, lay a seedling mat or heating pad over the top, and use a digital thermometer to monitor the temperature.

Discarding

- Discarding is necessary for two reasons: (1) skipping it will cause overflow, especially with a 1:1:1 feeding ratio; and (2) "no-discard" methods that add the same amount each time eventually starve the yeast or, if still feeding 1:1:1, will produce far more starter than most homebakers will need.
- During the first 7 days, throw away all discard — do not use or save it. It contains harmful bacteria. After Day 8 it should be usable, but I recommend waiting until you have started noticing it starting to smell more pleasant as the flavor can carry over into your baked goods. Until it has fully transitioned to a yeasty/tangy scent be sure any surfaces it comes in contact with are cleaned well - think raw chicken (same bacteria).
- Discard should always be stored in the fridge. Still do not fasten a lid down, keep it loose to avoid gas buildup cracking or breaking the jar. You can keep adding to the same jar.
- Shelf Life:
 - Fridge: 2-3 weeks (some say more, but I recommend 3 weeks as a max). The older it gets the more bitter the flavor becomes. Rule of thumb is use for anything the first week, while flavor is mild (cookies, pancakes, etc..). After a week best in stronger flavored recipes that mask any bitterness - think savory scones & pizza.
 - Freezer: up to 1 year (watch out for freezer burn). My ice cube tray holds about 50g, makes perfect size to grab just what I need when I want to bake!
- Discard is suitable for discard recipes only (replacing flour and hydration). It is never used to replace commercial yeast, though it does add some great "fluff" to whatever you use it in.
- You can also revive your discard (even frozen) to make it active again if anything ever happens to your mother starter. Simply feed it following the same instructions.

Baking with Your Starter

- To replace commercial yeast in bread, your starter must be at least 14 days old. Even then it will not be full strength — using boosters (active dry yeast, baking powder, apple cider vinegar) is perfectly fine while it matures. This is why many recipes specify using starter that is at least 30 days old.
- You will start noticing improvements every bake until the starter reaches max strength - usually about 2-3 months.

Maintaining/Storing Your Starter

- Keep feeding it per the above instructions and keep it in a warm location until you are happy with the baking results. It will continue to strengthen if you refrigerate it, but can take a year or more vs. 2-3 months if kept warm.
- Once ready to refrigerate:
 - Discard/Feed the starter 1:2:2 (20g starter, 40g each flour/water) - this assures that it has plenty to eat until the next feed.
 - Let sit 1 hour to make sure it has started eating.
 - Place in the fridge with a loose lid.
 - Discard/Feed every 7 days following the same process above.

Consistency & Troubleshooting

- Aim for a thick pancake batter consistency — it should pour, but very slowly.
 - Too thick? Add a little water. (Best performers are often 20g starter, 23g water, 20g flour.)
 - Too runny? Add flour, a very little at a time — it thickens quickly.
 - Your starter will likely smell bad before it smells good. Around Day 4 it may smell like gym socks — this is normal. Acetone/Alcohol scent is also normal during the first 10 days or so. A pleasant, yeasty scent should start developing by day 10. If it does not, try feeding a higher ratio (1:2:2).
 - Every starter is unique and can be affected by temperature, humidity, and even air quality. Do not be afraid to adjust the recipe to what works for you!
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CONTACT

Email if you have questions, need help, or just want to show off!

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