

HIGH-HYDRATION SOURDOUGH

(printed with permission from [Emilie Raffa](#))

Tips from Emilie: The first step toward bigger holes is to add more water, or to increase the dough's hydration. The second step is to expand your sourdough technique: Gently dimple the dough after the bulk rise and then shape it twice. Both techniques will help to open up the crumb and can be applied toward other doughs to achieve the same effect.

Suggested baker's schedule: Thursday and Friday: Feed your starter until bubbly and active. Saturday Evening: Make the dough and let rise overnight. Sunday Morning: Shape the dough, let rise again, score and bake.

Bread formula

50 g (¼ cup) bubbly, active starter (mine was at 100% hydration)

375 g (1 ½ cups plus 1 tbs) warm water

500 g (4 cups plus 2 tbs) bread flour

9 g (1 ½ tsp) fine sea salt

Making the dough

In the evening, whisk the starter and water together in a large bowl with a fork. Add the flour and salt. Mix to combine, then finish by hand to form a rough dough. Cover with a damp towel and let rest for 1 hour. After the dough has rested, work it into a ball, about 15 to 20 seconds.

Bulk fermentation

Cover the bowl with a damp towel and let rise overnight at room temperature, about 8 to 10 hours at 70 ° F (21 ° C). The dough is ready when it has doubled in size, has a few bubbles on the surface, and jiggles when you move the bowl from side to side.

Shaping the dough

In the morning, coax the dough onto a floured surface. Dimple the dough all over with floured fingertips. Gently shape it into a round and let rest for 5 to 10 minutes. Meanwhile, line an 8-inch (20-cm) bowl or proofing basket with a towel and dust with flour. Using a bench scraper, scoop up the dough and flip it over so that the smooth side is facing down. Shape it again, and then flip it back over. Cup the dough and gently pull it toward you in a circular motion to tighten its shape. Place into your lined bowl, seam side up.

Final fermentation

Cover the dough and refrigerate for 1 hour to set its structure. Note: You can chill this dough for up to 6 hours or more. When ready to bake, let sit at room temperature while the oven heats up.

Baking the bread

Heat your oven to 500 ° F (260 ° C). Cut a piece of parchment to fit the size of your baking pot. Place the parchment over the dough and invert the bowl to release. Dust the surface with flour and rub with your hands to coat. Using the tip of a small knife or a razor blade, score the dough with the pattern of your choice. Use the parchment to transfer the dough into the baking pot. Place the pot on the center rack, and reduce the heat to 450 ° F (230 ° C). Bake the dough for 20 minutes, covered. Remove the lid, and continue to bake for 30 minutes. Lift the loaf out of the pot, and bake directly on the oven rack for the last 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour before slicing.