



These instructions explain how

- to **refresh** your complimentary rye starter with Scotland The Bread wheat flour
- to **make** two simple tasty nutritious sourdough loaves
- to **pass on** some culture, skill (and love¹)

What's in the box?

3 x 1 kg Scotland The Bread organic wholemeal wheat flour
10 g Bread Matters original sourdough starter culture (originating in Russia in 1990 and refreshed most recently with Scotland The Bread organic rye flour)

A note about the flour

Scotland The Bread organic wholemeal flour is milled from historic long-strawed wheat varieties that are genetically diverse, adapted to local conditions and above-average in nutrient content. Their gluten is more extensible than elastic, so they are good for flat breads and similar styles. If you want more 'lift', add up to 25% of a strong white flour.

The good news is that the gluten in Scotland The Bread flour

- develops easily and so requires much less kneading than 'strong' flours
- responds well to sourdough fermentation, and
- is likely to be easily digested by most people

Scotland The Bread also grows and mills **rye flour** (available in the online shop and at Bowhouse markets). Rye is excellent for maintaining a sourdough starter. In this recipe, replace some wheat flour with up to 150 g of rye flour for an even tastier loaf that keeps for ages.

Top tip

Add some large **seeds** like sunflower or pumpkin (washed and pre-soaked overnight) to help hold the dough together (as well as giving flavour and good nutrients). About 15% of dough weight is enough to have real benefits (150 g in the recipe below).

If you have your own reliable starter, skip stage 1 – and maybe share the packet of dry starter with a friend.

Stage 1 Activate the rye starter with wheat flour

Rye sourdough starter sachet	10 g
Scotland The Bread flour	30 g
Water (about 35°C, i.e. warm)	60 g
Total starter	100 g

Empty the dry sourdough powder into the water (the sachet is compostable) and mix until well dispersed. Add the flour and mix until you have a smooth, sloppy mixture. Cover and put in a warm place. The closer to 30°C the better, but if you cannot achieve this, don't worry. It will just take a little longer to work. Leave for 4-12 hours (depending on how warm it is in your 'incubation' place), by which time the mixture should be bubbling a little on the top and should smell and taste slightly acidic.

Stage 2 Make a 'production sourdough'

Starter from Stage 1 (or your own)	80 g † (see next page)
Scotland The Bread flour	140 g
Water (about 35°C, i.e. warm)	90 g
Total	310 g

¹ "When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece." – John Ruskin (1819-1900)

† That should leave about 20 grams of the starter you made in Stage 1. Keep this in the fridge until you want to make more bread or want to share your culture (see below). Since you always lose a little dough on the sides of bowls and on your hands, it's as well to make a bit extra whenever you are refreshing a sourdough starter.

Mix everything together into a pretty soft dough. Cover and leave in a warm place for 4 hours. Then use this Production Sourdough to make your final dough.

Stage 3 The final dough

Production sourdough (from above)	300 g
Scotland The Bread flour	400 g
Sea salt	8 g
Water (about 30°C) approx.	300 g ††
Total	1008 g + seeds if desired (see Tip above)

†† Adjust the water content as follows: for tin breads, make a pretty wet dough; for basket-proved and free-standing loaves, make a slightly firmer dough.

Mix everything together (except the seeds if you are using them) and knead gently for a couple of minutes. Rest for about 30 minutes and then knead briefly with wet hands to 'gather' the dough, whose gluten should now be becoming a bit more coherent and slightly stretchy. Remember – this is wholemeal flour and the nutrient-rich and very tasty germ and bran do not become stretchier with kneading and the dough is going to reflect this. If you are using seeds, drain them of any loose water and fold them into the dough now.

Divide your dough into two pieces and put them into tins or floured proving baskets or onto baking trays for their final rise. This may take anything from two to five or more hours, depending on the temperature of your dough and proving place. Be patient. If your dough is taking a long time to rise, remember that the flavour, digestibility and nutrient availability are increasing with each anxious minute. The important thing is to prevent the exposed surface of the dough from drying out and forming a 'straitjacket'. Covering with an impervious layer (trendy waxed cotton is good if you're avoiding polythene) creates a moist micro-climate that allows the dough to expand. Gentle brushing with warm water can help soothe and release a 'leathery' top.

When the dough has come up enough (roughly doubled in volume is good), bake at 220°C for 10 minutes, reducing to 200°C for another 25 minutes or so. Ovens vary greatly and you will know your own, so your judgment supersedes these suggestions.

One thing to note: Scotland The Bread flour has a fairly high natural sugar (maltose) content (as a result of harvesting conditions). Most of that sugar is used by the yeasts and bacteria in sourdough fermentation, but enough of it remains at baking time to give a distinctive malty flavour and darker colour to the bread. If you know your oven to be rather 'harsh', consider reducing the baking temperature and extending the time a little to avoid crusts that are more caramelised than you want.

When cool (if you aren't already, of course) – please **share a loaf** (or even just a slice) with a friend, neighbour or outright stranger. Tell them what's in it, why you love making bread and all about Scotland The Bread and the **Real Bread Campaign**.

Storing/sharing your sourdough

If you follow these instructions to the letter, you'll have barely 20 grams of activated starter left. Add 60 g of flour and 120 g of water (or more of each, roughly in these proportions), mix well and put in a glass jar or polypropylene tub with a lid in the fridge. The fuller you keep your sourdough jar (allowing for a little fermentation in the fridge), the better it will keep - until the next bake.

Problems?

There are answers to many questions at

<https://scotlandthebread.org/our-work/sourdough-baking/sourdough-faqs/>

There are **other recipes** (including one for fermenting the bran separately) here:

<https://scotlandthebread.org/our-work/sourdough-baking/recipes/>