

NO-KNEAD SUPER-SEEDED BREAD

This is our everyday bread I make for daily sandwiches and toasting. It is full of nutritious seeds (about a quarter of the dry ingredients) and keeps well for up to 5 days. The long soaking of the flour and seeds, with the addition of lactic acid from the starter, plus yoghurt, milk kefir or whey, results in a tender crumb and easily digestible loaf.

This bread takes around 10–14 hours from start to finish (although mostly unattended), depending on the time of year and kitchen temperature. I often prepare the dough when making dinner (6pm) then scoop it into the tin prior to going to bed (10pm) and bake the bread first thing in the morning (7am).

You can also make this bread without a sourdough starter, by using dried yeast (see opposite).

MAKES APPROX. 850G LOAF / DAIRY-FREE OPTION

150g / 1 cup white flour
160g / 1 cup wholemeal flour
80g / ½ cup cooked or sprouted grains (rye, wheat, porridge oats, quinoa, rice, buckwheat)
85 mixed → 75g / ½ cup sunflower and/or pumpkin seeds
45g / ¼ cup whole flaxseeds (linseed)
7g / 1½ teaspoons unrefined sea or rock salt
250g / 1 cup warm filtered water (about 40°C)
150g / ¾ cup bubbly sourdough starter, fed 6–12 hours prior
85g / ½ cup natural yoghurt (dairy or coconut), milk kefir or cultured whey

If using spelt flour, increase the flour quantity by 10g (1 tablespoon) per cup of flour.

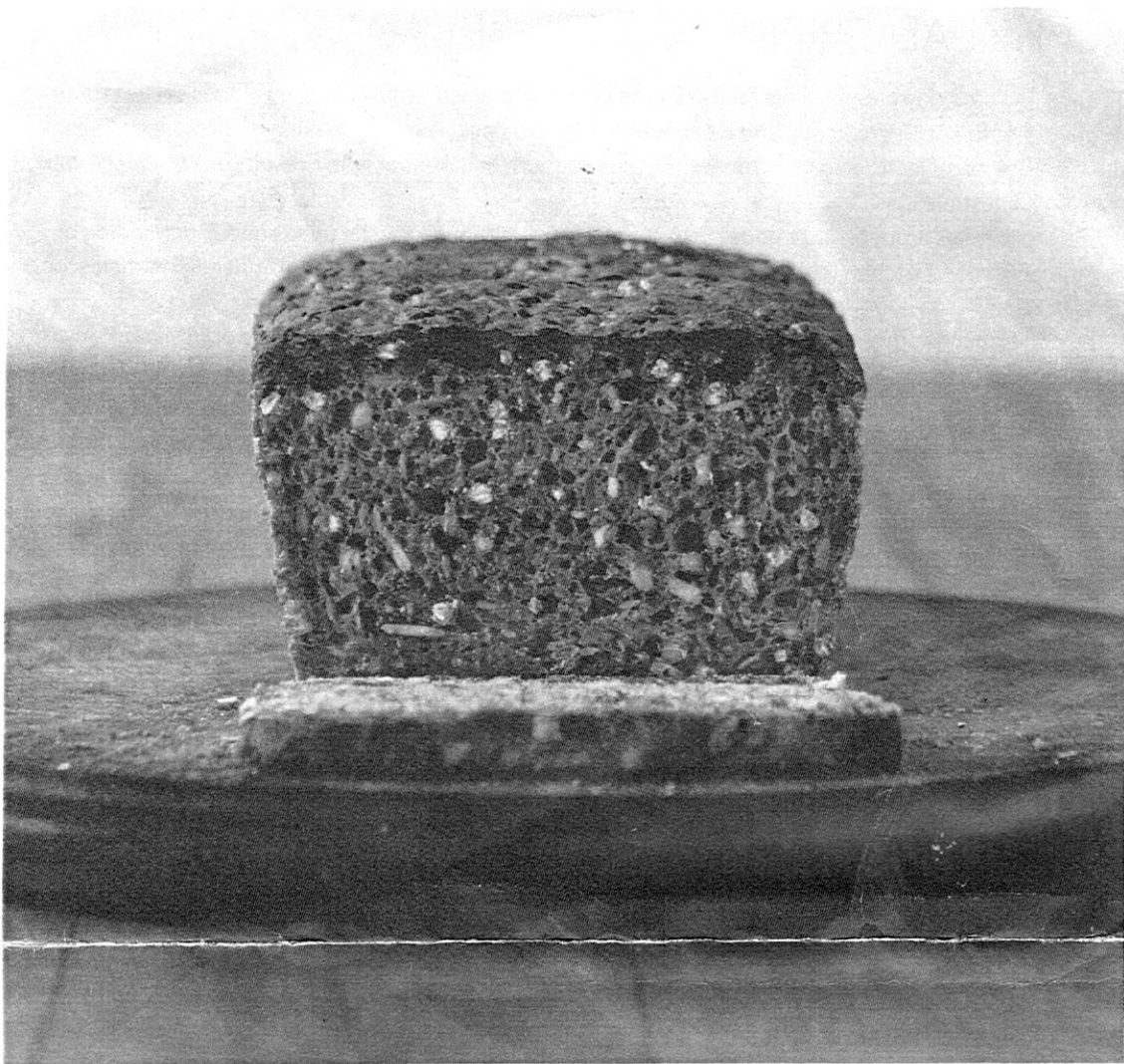
Step 1. Combine the dry ingredients in a bowl and use a balloon whisk to mix well and aerate. Pour in the water, starter and yoghurt, kefir or whey. Use a rubber spatula to mix well for 1 minute to thoroughly incorporate the ingredients. The mixture will be wet and sticky, unlike kneaded bread dough. Now is a good time to replenish your starter, using 40g flour and 40g water (see page 64).

Step 2. Cover the bowl with a plate to prevent the dough drying out and leave to rise (bulk ferment) in a warm position for 4–6 hours until it has risen noticeably, by about a third. Warmth is important at this stage. A high shelf in the kitchen where heat collects or beside a fire in winter will ensure the fermentation begins. Or switch on the oven to 50°C for 10 minutes then turn it off and place the bowl in the warm oven to rise.

Step 3. Generously grease a bread tin (about 21.5cm × 11cm × 7cm) – or use a bread-maker tin (see opposite). Use a dough scraper or spatula to fold the dough over on itself several times then scoop the dough into the tin and smooth off the top. Sprinkle with a small handful of seeds if desired. Wrap loosely in a plastic bag, pinching the plastic up and away from the dough, or place in a large lidded container to prevent the surface drying out. Leave to rise again until the dough has risen by about a third and has a domed, puffed surface. This will take about 4–6 hours in the daytime and 8–9 hours overnight, depending on the temperature. If it is very cold in your kitchen, leave the bread to rise in a warm position (see Making Bread in Winter, page 64).

Step 4. Once the bread has risen sufficiently, preheat the oven to 240°C. Remove the bread from the bag/container and place it in the oven. Immediately turn the heat down to 220°C and bake for 40 minutes.

Step 5. Take the bread from the oven and tip it out of the tin (if it doesn't come out easily, use a spatula or dough scraper to loosen the sides). It should sound hollow when tapped and the crust lovely and golden. If not, place the loaf – without the tin – back in the oven for another 10 minutes to brown the crust.



Step 6. Cool the bread on a rack, waiting at least 2 hours before slicing or the moisture will be lost and the bread can stale quickly. Store in a bread bin or pantry – not the fridge – in a paper bag or rolled in a tea towel and consume within 5 days.

To make this bread with yeast:

Omit the sourdough starter and add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon active dried yeast, 75g ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) extra flour and 75g ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup + 1 tablespoon) extra warm water to the dough. (Only a small amount of yeast is required due to the long, slow rise.)

To bake in a bread-maker:

Once the bread has sufficiently risen in the tin, set the bread-maker to the 'bake only' cycle for 40–50 minutes. Bread makers can vary so, when making the first loaf, check after 40 minutes to see if it is ready and return it to the maker for a further 10 minutes to complete cooking if needed.