

THE SOURDOUGH FORMULA

Recipe 3 · Soft Sandwich Loaf

The loaf my kids ask for. Soft enough for PB&J, still real sourdough.

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Why people buy it: it's the soft, square, sliceable bread families already buy every week, only this one is homemade and has a short ingredient list.

- **Tier & price:** Everyday · Plain · **$9**
- **Makes:** 1 pan loaf in a 9 × 5 in (23 × 13 cm) pan
- **Difficulty:** Easy
- **Timeline:** Feed Dolly Friday 8 am → mix 4 pm → shape around 10 pm → pan in the fridge overnight → out at 6 am, rise 2–3 hours → bake 9 am

Ingredients

Ingredient	Grams	Cups (approx.)
Bread flour	500 g	4 cups
Whole milk, lukewarm	280 g	1 cup + 3 tbsp
Active starter	100 g	½ cup
Honey	30 g	1½ tbsp
Butter, very soft	40 g	3 tbsp
Fine sea salt	10 g	1¾ tsp
Butter, melted, for brushing	5 g	1 tsp

What changes vs. the Master Loaf

- **Milk instead of water, plus honey and butter.** This is an enriched dough: softer crumb, thin golden crust, and it stays fresh for days.
- **Butter goes in after the salt**, never at the mix, so it doesn't coat the flour before the gluten starts.
- **Slower bulk.** Butter and milk slow Dolly down. Expect 5–7 hours.
- **Baked in a loaf pan at a lower temperature**, with no Dutch oven and no scoring needed.

Steps

1. **The morning feed:** feed Dolly at 8 am.

2. **Mix and autolyse:** stir the honey into the milk, keeping back 20 g of the milk. Add the flour and mix until shaggy. Rest 30 minutes (Master Loaf step 1).
3. **Add the starter, then the salt** with the reserved milk (Master Loaf step 2). Then add the soft butter a spoonful at a time, squishing and folding until the dough is glossy again. This takes about 3–4 minutes. It looks messy at first and then comes together.
4. **Stretch & folds:** 4 sets, 30 minutes apart (Master Loaf step 3). The dough gets silky and strong.
5. **Bulk** at 75–78 °F (24–26 °C) until it has grown about 75 % and feels airy, 5–7 hours from mixing.
6. **Shape.** Butter your 9 × 5 pan. Turn the dough out, press it into a rectangle about 8 × 10 in (20 × 25 cm), short side facing you. Roll it up tightly like a sleeping bag, pinching each turn. Pinch the seam closed.
7. **Pan it** seam down. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
8. **Final rise.** Saturday morning, leave it on the counter somewhere warm until the dome rises about 1 in (2.5 cm) above the rim of the pan, usually 2–3 hours. The poke test: a gentle fingertip dent should spring back slowly.
9. **Bake** at 375 °F (190 °C) on the middle rack for 40–45 minutes. If the top is browning fast at 25 minutes, lay a sheet of foil over it. Done at 190 °F (88 °C) inside.
10. **Brush** the top with melted butter, wait 10 minutes, then turn it out of the pan onto a rack. Cool 2 hours before slicing or bagging.

Shaping, scoring & baking specifics

- **Pan:** 9 × 5 in metal loaf pan. Glass works too; lower the oven to 350 °F (175 °C) and add 5 minutes.
- **Bake day:** sandwich loaves bake 4 at a time on one rack while the Dutch ovens rest. This is how you stretch Saturday to 20 loaves.
- **Enriched doughs** are done at 190 °F (88 °C), not 205 °F. The milk and butter set the crumb sooner.

Cost & Price

Ingredient	Amount	Cost
Bread flour	500 g	$0.61
Starter (with feed)	100 g	$0.25
Whole milk	280 g	$0.30
Honey	30 g	$0.40
Butter	45 g	$0.50
Salt	10 g	$0.01
Oven share (4 pans per bake)	¼ bake	$0.20
Total ingredients		**$2.27**
Packaging (bag, label, twine)	1 set	$0.35
Sell at		**$9.00**
You keep		**$6.38**

How to sell it

Families with young kids, toast people, anyone who finds a crusty boule «too much». This is the most common second loaf on a standing order: one boule and one sandwich loaf every week.

Menu line to copy: *Soft Sandwich Sourdough. Tender, sliceable and made with milk, honey and butter. Perfect for school lunches. $9*

> ***Sarah's tip: Tell people to keep it in the bag on the counter, never in the fridge. It stays soft four days easily, and that's the thing parents mention in their messages.***

If it goes wrong

- **Short, dense loaf:** it went into the oven too early. Wait for the dome to rise 1 in above the rim, even if that takes another hour.
- **Big tunnel under the top crust:** the log wasn't rolled tightly. Press out the air and pinch every turn.

- **Pale sides:** pop it out of the pan for the last 5 minutes, straight onto the rack in the oven.