

THE SOURDOUGH FORMULA

Recipe 7 · Rustic Light Rye

A little rye goes a long way: earthy, tangy, and gorgeous with smoked salmon.

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Why people buy it: it's the old-world deli loaf people remember from their grandparents, perfect for Reubens, smoked salmon and soup.

- **Tier & price:** Everyday · Classic · **$11**
- **Makes:** 1 round or oval loaf, about 950 g of dough
- **Difficulty:** Medium
- **Timeline:** Friday 8 am feed → 4 pm mix → shorter bulk → shape around 8:30 pm → fridge → Saturday 7 am bake

Ingredients

Ingredient	Grams	Cups (approx.)
Bread flour	400 g	3¼ cups
Whole rye flour	100 g	1 scant cup
Water, 80 °F (27 °C)	340 g	1⅓ cups + 2 tsp
Active starter	100 g	½ cup
Fine sea salt	10 g	1¾ tsp
Caraway seeds (optional)	6 g	2 tsp
Rice flour, for the banneton	a spoonful	1 tbsp

What changes vs. the Master Loaf

- **20 % rye.** Rye has very little gluten and gets sticky rather than stretchy, so hydration goes slightly **down** to **68 %**. More water here makes a gummy loaf.
- **3 sets of folds** instead of 4. Rye dough doesn't need the extra strength-building, and handling it more just makes it stickier.
- **Faster bulk.** Rye ferments quickly. Stop at +50 %, often around 3½–4½ hours.
- **Caraway** goes in at the mix if you want the classic deli flavor.

Steps

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

2. **Mix** the water, bread flour, rye and caraway. Mix well and autolyse 30 minutes (Master Loaf step 1).
3. **Add the starter, then the salt** (Master Loaf step 2).
4. **Stretch & folds: 3 sets**, 30 minutes apart. Use wet hands, not flour. The dough feels tacky like modeling clay. That's rye, not a mistake.
5. **Bulk** until about +50 %, with bubbles on the sides and a slightly domed top. Usually 3½–4½ hours from mixing.
6. **Pre-shape** with a wet bench scraper and rest 15–20 minutes (Master Loaf step 5).
7. **Final shape** (Master Loaf step 6), with a light dusting of flour on the counter. Into a banneton generously dusted with rice flour.
8. **Cold proof** 10–14 hours (Master Loaf step 7).
9. **Score and bake** as Master Loaf step 8, aiming for the top of the range: **208–210 °F** (98–99 °C) inside. Rye needs to bake through fully.
10. **Cool at least 3 hours.** Rye crumb keeps setting as it cools, and it slices best the same afternoon or the next day.

Shaping, scoring & baking specifics

- **Score:** a crosshatch (3 cuts one way, 3 the other) looks beautifully rustic on rye and lets it expand evenly.
- **Crust:** lightly dust the top with rye flour before scoring for that floury deli look.
- **Same Dutch oven bake**, adding 3–5 minutes lid off if the internal temperature is under 208 °F.

Cost & Price

Ingredient	Amount	Cost
Bread flour	400 g	$0.49
Whole rye flour	100 g	$0.24
Starter (with feed)	100 g	$0.25
Caraway seeds	6 g	$0.10
Salt	10 g	$0.01
Rice flour (dusting)	1 tbsp	$0.05
Oven share	½ bake	$0.46
Total ingredients		**$1.60**
Packaging (bag, label, twine)	1 set	$0.35
Sell at		**$11.00**
You keep		**$9.05**

How to sell it

Older neighbors, Jewish deli lovers, Scandinavians, anyone hosting a brunch with lox. It's a wonderful «soup season» loaf from October on.

Menu line to copy: *Rustic Light Rye. Old-world rye sourdough with a hint of caraway. Made for smoked salmon, Reubens and soup. $11*

> ***Sarah's tip: Tell your buyers rye is even better on day two. It sounds like a little thing, and it's what makes them trust you.***

If it goes wrong

- **Gummy center:** cut too soon or underbaked. Bake to 210 °F and wait the full 3 hours.
- **Sticky dough you can't shape:** use wet hands and a wet scraper instead of flour, and cut the water to 330 g next time.
- **Flat loaf:** rye over-proofs fast. Shorten bulk by 30 minutes and cold proof closer to 10 hours.