

Sourdough Discard Storage Guide

What It Is, How to Store It, and How to Bring It Back to Life

Sourdough discard is simply the portion of starter you remove before feeding. It's still useful, still full of flavor, and absolutely worth keeping.

The key is knowing how to store it properly so it doesn't turn into something questionable in the back of your fridge.

HOW TO STORE SOURDOUGH DISCARD

✓ Refrigerate it

Keep your discard in a jar in the fridge. This slows down fermentation and keeps it usable for longer.

✓ Use a loose lid or cover

Do not seal it airtight. It needs a little airflow since fermentation is still happening slowly.

✓ Keep adding to it

You can continue adding discard to the same jar over several days.

👉 Just don't let it sit there for weeks without attention.

✓ Use within 1 to 2 weeks for best results

After that, the flavor can become very strong and more acidic.

WHAT IS HOOCH (AND SHOULD YOU PANIC?)

That dark liquid on top? That's called **hooch**.

✓ It's alcohol produced by fermentation

✓ It means your starter or discard is hungry

👉 It is NOT dangerous

What to do:

- Stir it back in → stronger flavor
- Pour it off → milder flavor

If it smells like alcohol or strong vinegar, it's normal.
If it smells rotten or truly foul... toss it.

WHAT ABOUT THAT DRY CRUST ON TOP?

If your discard has been sitting in the fridge, you might see a dry, grayish crust.

- ✓ This happens from air exposure
- ✓ It's completely normal

What to do:

- Remove the dry top layer
- Use the discard underneath

👉 If the whole thing is dried out or discolored deeply, don't risk it. Toss it.

! WHEN TO THROW IT AWAY

Be honest here, some things are not worth saving.

- 🚫 Pink, orange, or green streaks
- 🚫 Fuzzy mold
- 🚫 Truly rotten smell

👉 That's not sourdough. That's a science experiment gone wrong.

HOW TO REVIVE SOURDOUGH DISCARD

If your discard has been sitting for a while and looks sluggish:

1. Bring it to room temperature

Cold starter is slow and inactive.

2. Feed it

Add equal parts flour and water (by weight if possible).

3. Let it sit

Give it a few hours and look for activity:

- bubbles
- slight rise
- fresh, tangy smell

4. Repeat if needed

Sometimes it takes 1 to 2 feedings to bring it fully back.

PRO TIPS (THE STUFF PEOPLE DON'T TELL YOU)

✓ Older discard = stronger flavor

Great for crackers and flatbreads, less ideal for delicate pancakes.

✓ You don't need to overmanage it

Discard is forgiving. It doesn't need perfection.

✓ Keep it simple

One jar, in the fridge, use it regularly. That's it.

✨ FINAL THOUGHT

Sourdough discard is not waste. It's an ingredient.

Once you get comfortable storing and using it, you stop throwing it away and start cooking smarter.

And honestly... that's when sourdough becomes fun instead of frustrating.