Sourdough Bulk Fermentation Temperature Chart: 68–78°F

Bulk time by **dough** temperature, for a dough with 20% starter (as a percentage of flour). Times at 70°F and 75°F are rows of the Sourdough Archive chart; 68, 72 and 78°F are our straight-line fill-ins between its rows, not published figures.

Dough temp	Bulk time (20% starter)	Where the figure comes from	Plan on (midpoint)	Rise target in the chart
68°F (20°C)	6 h 48 min – 10 h 12 min	Fill-in between the 65°F and 70°F rows	8 h 30 min	75–100% at 65°F; 50–75% at 70°F
70°F (21°C)	6 – 9 h	Published row	7 h 30 min	50–75%
72°F (22°C)	5 h 12 min – 7 h 48 min	Fill-in between the 70°F and 75°F rows	6 h 30 min	50–75% at 70°F; 30–50% at 75°F
75°F (24°C)	4 – 6 h	Published row	5 h	30–50%
78°F (26°C)	3 h 24 min – 4 h 48 min	Fill-in between the 75°F and 80°F rows	4 h 05 min	30–50% at 75°F; 25–30% at 80°F

How to use it

- **Measure the dough, not the room.** Two kitchens at the same air temperature can make doughs 10°F apart, depending on the water used.
- **Starter amount moves the time as much as temperature does.** At 75°F the same chart runs from 8–12 h with 5% starter to 2–4 h with 30% or more.
- **Rule of thumb from the chart:** every 10°F drop roughly doubles the bulk time.
- **Use the clock to plan and the dough to decide.** Stop when the dough shows the signs of a finished bulk, not when the timer ends. Warm dough keeps fermenting while it cools, so it can go in the fridge a little earlier.

My bakes

Date	Dough temp	Starter %	Bulk start	Bulk end	Rise	Notes

Sources: times, rise targets, starter amounts and the cooling note come from Sourdough Archive, "Sourdough Bulk Fermentation Chart: Complete Temperature + Time Guide," sourdougharchive.com/sourdough-bulk-fermentation-chart/ (checked 2026-10-23); "judge the dough" follows The Perfect Loaf's bulk fermentation guide and King Arthur Baking's "Bulk fermentation, explained." Fill-ins and midpoints are our arithmetic. Full guide, other recipes compared and a bake planner: bakerspercent.com/sourdough-bulk-fermentation-temperature-chart/

Plan the whole bake with the $6 Sourdough Schedule Pack: palmore7.gumroad.com/l/kxtkpp