

Jalapeno-Cheddar Sourdough “Coffin Method” Workflow

Repeatable four-loaf process: two plain sandwich loaves and two jalapeno-cheddar loaves

The operating idea

- **Sourdough Buddy:** prepares 400 g of active, airy starter on schedule.
- **Sourdough Lab:** provides a controlled 78-80 F environment for bulk and final proof.
- **Coffin method:** each loaf bakes in a loaf pan covered by an inverted second loaf pan. No ice is needed.
- **Best start time:** 0700-0800 for an evening finish. A 1500 start can push the bake toward 0400.
- **Hand-off rule:** Use the clock to know when to check. Use the dough to know when to move.

Quick reference

Stage	Target	Typical time
Starter ready	400 g; bubbly, airy, near peak	Prepared by Buddy
Initial rest	Fully hydrated, shaggy dough	30-45 min
Folds	3 sets; dough gains strength	Every 30 min
Finish bulk	50-75% rise; puffy, bubbles, slight jiggle	About 1.5-4 hr after fold 3
Final proof	Near/slightly above pan rim; slow spring-back	About 2-3 hr at 78-80 F
Bake covered	Coffin lid on	425 F for 25 min
Bake uncovered	Plain 195-200 F; cheese 200-205 F	375 F for 20-30 min
Cooling	Out of pans after 10 min	90-120 min before slicing

1. Ingredients and equipment

Base dough - four 9 x 5 inch sandwich loaves

Ingredient	Amount
Active sourdough starter	400 g
Warm water	1,200 g to start; up to 1,250 g as needed
Bread flour	1,800 g
Rye flour	100 g
Salt	40 g
Honey	80 g
Softened butter or olive oil	80 g

Jalapeno-cheddar additions - for two loaves

- 250-300 g sharp cheddar, cubed, coarsely shredded, or a 50/50 mix
- 100-125 g jalapenos, drained and dried thoroughly
- Optional: 1 tsp garlic powder and 1/2 tsp smoked paprika

Equipment

- Sourdough Buddy and Sourdough Lab
- Large mixing vessel and two covered bulk containers
- Kitchen scale, dough scraper, thermometer, and sharp scoring blade
- Four 9 x 5 inch loaf pans plus four matching pans for lids
- Oil or pan spray, parchment paper, cooling racks, instant-read thermometer

Dough consistency after hand mixing

Soft, tacky, shaggy, and fully hydrated with no dry flour pockets. It should lift as one mass, not pour like batter. Rye makes it slightly stickier and less silky. Use wet hands instead of adding flour. If tight, add water 10-15 g at a time. If sloppy, rest 20 minutes before correcting.

2. Prepare the dough

- **Mix:** Combine starter, 1,200 g water, and honey. Add bread flour and rye flour. Mix by hand until no dry flour remains.
- **Rest:** Cover and rest 30-45 minutes.
- **Add salt and fat:** Work in the salt and softened butter or oil. Add the remaining water only if needed.
- **Fold 1:** After 30 minutes, perform a full stretch-and-fold set with wet hands.
- **Fold 2:** Repeat 30 minutes later.
- **Fold 3:** Repeat again 30 minutes later. The dough should now be smoother, stronger, and more cohesive.

3. Split, add inclusions, and finish bulk fermentation

After fold 3, divide the full dough into two equal large bundles. Do not divide into four loaves yet.

- Weigh and split the dough into two equal halves.
- Leave one half plain.
- Place the plain half in its covered bulk container.
- Build the spicy half using the inclusion method below, then place it in a separate covered container.

Improved inclusion method for cleaner, more consistent rings

- **1. Make an even rectangle:** Gently stretch the spicy half into a uniform rectangle about 1/2-3/4 inch thick. Avoid thin spots.
- **2. Leave a clean border:** Keep about 1 inch around all edges free of cheese and jalapeno. This helps the seam seal and reduces leaks.
- **3. Use smaller, evenly distributed pieces:** Coarse shreds or small cubes produce more uniform rings than large chunks. Break up cheese clumps.
- **4. Press inclusions in lightly:** Gently press the cheese and jalapenos into the dough so they do not skid during folding.
- **5. Layer in two passes:** Spread half the inclusions, fold the dough in thirds like a letter, gently flatten, then add the remaining inclusions.
- **6. Finish with a tight roll:** Roll from the short side into a snug cylinder, maintaining light tension with each turn. Do not crush the dough.
- **7. Seal and tuck:** Pinch the final seam closed, tuck the ends underneath, and place seam-side down.

Goal: distinct, even inclusion rings without sacrificing the light, airy crumb.

Bulk fermentation is complete when

- Each bundle is about 50-75% larger than its post-split volume.
- The dough looks puffy and slightly domed, with bubbles at the sides or underneath.
- The container gives a gentle jiggle when moved.
- The cheese dough may look less dramatically risen because inclusions interrupt the gluten structure.

Typical time after fold 3: about 1.5-4 hours at 75-80 F. Start checking at 90 minutes because a strong, on-time starter can move quickly.

4. Divide, shape, and pan

- Divide the plain bundle into two equal loaves and the spicy bundle into two equal loaves.
- Gently preshape each portion into a rectangle; rest 15-20 minutes if the dough resists.
- Shape each into a tight sandwich-loaf cylinder. Tuck exposed cheese inside when possible.
- Oil the loaf pans and line with parchment, leaving handles over the long sides.
- Place each shaped loaf seam-side down in its pan.

5. Final proof in the Sourdough Lab

Set the Lab to 78-80 F. Cover the pans lightly so the surface does not dry out.

- Proof about 2-3 hours; begin checking at 90 minutes.
- Ready when the dough is near or slightly above the pan rim.
- A lightly floured finger press should spring back slowly and leave a partial dent.
- Do not wait for a full doubling. The jalapeno-cheddar loaves may need 15-30 minutes longer.

Batch timing log

Checkpoint	Planned	Actual	Notes
Starter ready	_____	_____	_____
Initial mix	_____	_____	_____
Fold 1	_____	_____	_____
Fold 2	_____	_____	_____
Fold 3	_____	_____	_____
Bulk complete	_____	_____	_____
Shape/pan	_____	_____	_____
Final proof complete	_____	_____	_____
Oven start	_____	_____	_____
Bake complete	_____	_____	_____

6. Coffin-method bake

No ice: The covered loaf pans trap enough moisture released by the dough. Adding ice can cool the pan, leave the bottom gummy, and create uneven steam.

- **Preheat:** Heat oven to 425 F for at least 25-30 minutes.
- **Score:** Make one lengthwise cut about 1/4-1/2 inch deep.
- **Cover:** Place an inverted matching loaf pan over each loaf. Use metal binder clips only if needed; remove any plastic clip handles.
- **Covered phase:** Bake at 425 F for 25 minutes.
- **Uncover:** Remove top pans carefully and reduce oven to 375 F.
- **Uncovered phase:** Plain loaves 20-25 minutes; jalapeno-cheddar loaves 25-30 minutes.
- **Temperature:** Plain loaves 195-200 F; cheese loaves 200-205 F. Check the bread center rather than a molten cheese pocket.
- **Color control:** Tent loosely with foil if the tops are dark before the center reaches temperature.

7. Cooling and storage

- Rest in pans about 10 minutes, then lift out using parchment handles.
- Cool on racks for at least 90 minutes; two hours is best for cheese loaves.
- Do not slice hot. Early slicing can create a gummy crumb.
- Store fully cooled bread airtight at room temperature for 2-3 days, or slice and freeze.

8. Estimated nutrition

These are practical recipe estimates, not laboratory values. They assume a 100% hydration starter (200 g flour + 200 g water), 80 g butter, 275 g cheddar, 112 g jalapenos, and 20 slices per loaf. Actual values vary with flour and cheese brands, slice thickness, ingredient loss, and how much brine remains on pickled jalapenos.

Loaf type / serving	Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat	Sat. fat	Fiber	Sodium
Plain - whole loaf	2,108 kcal	54 g	417 g	22 g	11 g	17 g	3,944 mg
Plain - 1 of 20 slices	105 kcal	2.7 g	20.9 g	1.1 g	0.6 g	0.9 g	197 mg
Jalapeno-cheddar - whole loaf	2,678 kcal	89 g	422 g	67 g	40 g	19 g	4,799 mg
Jalapeno-cheddar - 1 of 20 slices	134 kcal	4.5 g	21.1 g	3.4 g	2.0 g	1.0 g	240 mg

Nutrition notes

- Slice count matters: Values above use 20 even slices per loaf. For 16 slices, multiply the per-slice values by 1.25; for 18 slices, multiply by about 1.11.

- **Olive oil substitution:** Calories and total fat stay similar, while saturated fat is substantially lower than the butter estimate.

- **Pickled jalapenos:** Sodium can be higher than shown and varies greatly by brand and how thoroughly the peppers are drained.

- Cheddar range: Using 250 g instead of 275 g changes each spicy slice by roughly 2.5 calories; using 300 g changes it by roughly 2.5 calories in the other direction.

- **Best accuracy:** Weigh the finished loaf, then calculate a serving by grams rather than assuming every slice is identical.

Observed results from the successful batch

- Inclusions held successfully.
- Crumb was light and airy.
- Heat was noticeable with a pleasant afterburn, not painful.
- Cheese flavor came through clearly.
- Slices toasted with a good crunch.
- Next refinement: tighter, more even layering and rolling for cleaner inclusion rings.

Suggested daylight schedule

Time	Action
0700	Starter ready; mix dough
0730-0745	End initial rest; add salt/fat
0815	Fold 1
0845	Fold 2
0915	Fold 3
0935	Split and add inclusions
1100-1330	Bulk likely completes - judge dough
1130-1400	Shape and pan
1330-1700	Final proof likely completes
1400-1730	Begin covered bake
1500-1830	Loaves out; cooling begins

This is a planning window, not a commandment. Temperature, starter strength, dough temperature, and inclusions all affect the clock. The dough always gets the final vote.

Troubleshooting notes

Issue	Response
Dough feels stiff	Add water 10-15 g at a time during mixing or an early fold.
Dough feels sloppy	Rest 20 minutes before adding flour. If still puddle-like, add bread flour 25 g at a time.
Dough sticks to hands	Use wet hands and a bench scraper; do not keep dusting with flour.
Weak rise	Extend proofing; confirm Lab temperature and starter activity.
Overproof warning	Dough is very fragile, deeply dented, or deflates when scored. Bake immediately.
Cheese leaks	Normal in moderation. Leave a clean border, seal the roll, tuck exposed cheese inward, and bake on a sheet pan.
Uneven inclusion rings	Use an even rectangle, smaller pieces, two thin layers, and a tighter short-side roll.
Top browns too fast	Tent with foil during the uncovered phase.
Bottom seems pale or gummy	Bake a few minutes longer uncovered and verify internal temperature.

Final hand-off rule

Record the actual times and Sourdough Lab temperature for each batch. After two or three runs, the household will have a highly reliable local schedule.