

Twice as Tasty

<http://www.twiceastasty.com>

Shipping Sourdough Starter

By Julie Laing

I've been shipping dehydrated sourdough starter since 2017 and gradually improved my methods to be the most affordable and to arrive without damage. Along the way, I've learned these lessons:

- A self-address, stamped regular envelope may seem the cheapest option, but it can get caught in modern mail-sorting machines and torn apart.
- Keep the starter in flakes instead of grinding it completely to a powder that could be mistaken for an illegal substance.
- Enclose a brief note that identifies the contents for your recipient (and any potential inspector). Sending fuller rehydration and care instructions digitally cuts down on paper and cost.
- Just a little dried starter gets a new active, bubbly jar going. Point this out to recipients in the enclosed note to reassure them that you sent enough.

Packaging and Mailing

These are the steps I take when packaging and mailing dehydrated sourdough starter:

1. Dry the starter using one of the methods in the Dehydrating Sourdough Starter guide (under Files in the [Sharing fermented starters](#) Facebook group). Store the chips in a glass jar with an airtight lid set in a cool, dark place.
2. Transfer 15 grams of dried sourdough chips to a snack-size zip-close bag and seal.
3. Slide the bag and note to the recipient into a 6" x 6" or 6" x 8" Kraft self-seal, no-bend mailer. The U.S. Postal Service accepts these mailers as first-class large envelopes, making it the cheapest option I have found when shipping within the United States. I order recycled mailers from [BubbleFast](#).
4. Seal, address, and return address the envelope and take it to the post office for mailing.
5. Email or otherwise digitally notify the recipient that the package is on the way, including links to rehydration and care instructions.

Tips & Tricks

- I have mailed this size of flat, rigid mailer as a first-class envelope from various post offices in Montana and Washington state over several years without issues. If you are mailing a larger volume of starter or use a padded envelope, you will likely need to pay package prices.
- I recommend taking at least your first few packages to the post office counter to ensure they are mailed at the rate you expect and your recipients aren't charged on delivery. I have successfully put on stamps myself and dropped the packages at the post office, but the cost ends up being higher if you pile on Forever stamps.

Hundreds of people have received Twice as Tasty sourdough starter through this process, but these are simply my best practices from personal experience. If you have had success with other shipping methods, I encourage you to share them in the [Sharing fermented starters](#) Facebook group.