

AT HOME KOMBUCHA BREWING!

Making Kombucha at Home is rewarding and fun! Once you get your process down, you'll find you can make your own Kombucha without too much trouble and much cheaper and tastier than store bought!

In this article, I will share with you how I've made mine, for over 6 years!

Everyone differs slightly in how long they like to ferment their Kombucha. My goal was to get it as sweet and naturally fizzy as possible!



1ST BREW THE TEA.

My Formula for making tea: ~**10 tea bags** (Green or Black) **1 cup of sugar to 1 gallon of water.** (or 5 bags and ½ cup for two quarts, or a whole box of 100 for ten gallons etc.) Boil the water. (I use a large stock pot for this step), dissolve/stir in the sugar and add the tea bags.

LET COOL.

Some Tips to think about: I've used plain, white sugar, I now use organic. Use whichever if you'd like, but do Not use Honey, esp. raw honey (they have bacteria and enzymes of their own and may complicate or alter your brew). Black tea makes a stronger Kombucha (can be good for growing/starting out), but I prefer Green Tea and so do most people I know. I make all my Kombucha with Organic Green Tea bags (you can buy boxes of 100 at Walmart or Meijer quite cheaply!)

If in a hurry, you can add less water to begin with (I use about 2/3 of my gallon: making stronger tea) and then add the extra cold water and/or ice to cool it faster. (Example: If making 5 gallons of tea, consider brewing the 50 bags and 5 cups sugar with 3 gallons of water and adding the other 2 {cold} gallons in later). Important! **Leave tea bags to **steep** for **SEVERAL HOURS** (you just might want to get a little lazy with this step and forget about it for a while!). Now, I typically will brew the tea the day before and just let it cool (or mostly cool) before adding it to my jars with my SCOBYs. Tip: Tie the bags together to make them easier to remove later!



2ND POUR TEA INTO LARGE GLASS JARS (YES, I DO RECOMMEND GLASS) AND ADD SCOBY. Cover with Fine-grade cheesecloth and secure with rubber band (see above pic). This will keep the bugs out, but let it Breathe!

Leave for 8 days.

You may find, with very thick SCOBYs (look at that pic below!) on a very hot day 6-7 to be sufficient, or in other situations, 9-10 (maybe even 12) to give that extra boost to the fermenting process or help your SCOBYs grow a bit bigger. But I find that for me, right around that 8-day period (and I do fluctuate with a bit earlier or a day later to keep from having to brew on Sabbath or other busy days, and it's just fine) seems to work wonderfully!



3RD FLAVOR & SECOND FERMENT!

While it is perfectly OK to drink at this stage, I find that during the second Fermenting stage, your Kombucha-drinking experience is truly taken up several notches! It is also the most fun and experimental part of the process!

You can use large or small jars/bottles or even flip-top ones to pour your Kombucha into, to flavor and ferment a second time.

Always add some fruity/sweet substance along with your Kombucha so it will continue to ferment and carbonate.

When making quite large batches of Kombucha (about 10 gallons or so), I found

the easiest way to boost and flavor to my Kombucha was to **add Juice concentrates** rather than fresh fruit or juice (let it un-thaw a little for easier pouring/measuring). I may add up to 1/3 of a can for whole gallons, but nearly always put into smaller (16oz) jars to skip this middle phase and add about 2 Tbs. of juice concentrate to each jar. I do add fresh peeled ginger, cut up in small pieces to all my jars/bottles. I find it helps with carbonation and in helping keep a crisp, fresh taste. (also great for digestion!) I also do some with just Lemon and ginger. I **strain** the kombucha before transferring to smaller jars, since I second ferment right into the final jars/bottles.

*I'm telling you what I do, but You can also use any juice, concentrates or fresh fruit you would like! I suggest the sweeter fruits: like peaches, mangoes etc. and discourage the acidic ones: like pineapple or grapefruit (but *feel free to experiment!). Whichever bottles or jars you choose to use be sure they can **seal securely** to hold in carbonation. (The **lids** I

have in the above picture are metal with a sealant coating on the inside, and the smaller jars, simply have the regular inserts that came with the jars.) For final ferment I screw them on tightly!

Leave from 2-4 days and then transfer to final jars (plain lemon/ginger usually a bit shorter time). Or, if they are already in their final jars, just stick straight in the fridge. You do not need to strain, as there is nothing whatsoever harmful in the "floaties" you may find growing or settling in your jars, but, of course, you can if you'd like a smoother drink experience. Sometimes you may find a small SCOBY (which would look more like a tiny, transparent blob of jelly at this point) form at the top. Don't be alarmed! Not harmful if swallowed, but I usually fish it out if I find one. Yeek!



4TH LABEL AND REFRIGERATE.

I do suggest that you label each bottle with whatever flavor you have chosen and the date: this way it is easy to distinguish newer batches from older ones. Labels don't have to be fancy! Just use a sharpie if you'd like.

Most importantly: **ENJOY!!! YUM!!**



Note: If you are just starting out in Kombucha making, give it time! You may need to allow your SCOBY time to adjust to its new environment and grow before you get a consistent result. You may need to leave a bit longer at first... Temperature, environment and all sorts of things can affect a SCOBY's growth: remember, you're dealing with a living process! Stick with it until it comes out how you like it and you won't be disappointed! Happy Kombucha brewing/Growing! 😊