

Kombucha Tea Tutorial

1. You will need:

1 Glass Jar - at least quart size

Plastic or Wooden Stirring Utensil

Tight-Weave Cloth or Paper Coffee Filter

Something to secure the cover to the jar (rubber band or canning jar rings work well)

2. Ingredients

Unfluoridated, Unchlorinated Water

White Sugar

Tea Bags or Loose Tea

Starter Tea or Distilled White Vinegar*

Active Kombucha SCOBY**

*While it may be tempting to experiment with different types of vinegar, it's very important to always use distilled white vinegar to ensure an appropriately acidic environment. Apple cider vinegar and rice vinegar are not appropriate for making kombucha tea.

** For your first batch, when activating a dehydrated kombucha SCOBY, you will need to refer to ratios in the activation instructions.

3. Determine batch size

If you have just started making kombucha, we also recommend slowly working up to larger batch sizes to help maintain proper ingredients ratios and to avoid stressing the SCOBY.

Kombucha Ingredient Ratios:

One-Quart Batch:

1½ teaspoon loose tea OR 2 tea bags

¼ cup sugar

2-3 cups water

½ cup starter tea or vinegar

Half-Gallon Batch:

1 tablespoon loose tea OR 4 tea bags

½ cup sugar

6-7 cups water

1 cup starter tea or vinegar

Gallon Batch:

2 tablespoons loose tea OR 8 tea bags

1 cup sugar

13-14 cups water

2 cups starter tea or vinegar

4. Combine hot water and sugar in a glass jar. Stir until the sugar dissolves. The water should be hot enough to steep the tea but does not have to be boiling.

5. Place the tea or tea bags in the sugar water to steep.

NOTE: Using a metal tea ball to contain loose tea for making kombucha is acceptable. The tea ball should be removed before adding the SCOBY and starter tea, so the tea ball will not come into contact with the SCOBY.

6. Cool the mixture to 68-85°F. The tea may be left in the liquid as it cools or removed after the first 10-15 minutes. The longer the tea is left in the liquid, the stronger the tea will be.

7. Remove the tea bags or completely strain the loose tea leaves from the liquid.

8. Add starter tea from a previous batch to the liquid. If you do not have starter tea, distilled white vinegar may be substituted.

9. Add an active kombucha SCOBY.

10. Cover the jar with a tight-weave towel or coffee filter and secure with a rubber band, canning ring, etc.

11. Allow the mixture to sit undisturbed at 68-85°F, out of direct sunlight, for 7-30 days, or to taste. The longer the kombucha ferments, the less sweet and more vinegary it will taste.

Tip: After 7 days, begin tasting the brewing kombucha. Use a straw or non-metal spoon to remove some liquid from the jar. Once the flavor reaches the desired sweetness or acidity, halt the process by pouring the finished kombucha into bottles or containers for flavoring or drinking plain.

12. Pour kombucha off the top of the jar for consuming. Retain the SCOBY and enough liquid from the bottom of the jar to use as starter tea for the next batch.

13. Kombucha can be enjoyed plain or flavored and bottled to carbonate in standard beer or grolsch-style bottles.

Ratios for Flavoring Kombucha Tea

-If flavoring with fresh, frozen, or dried fruit, start with 10-30% fruit and 70-90% Kombucha.

-If flavoring with juice, start with 10-20% juice and 80-90% Kombucha.

-If flavoring with herbs, the variety and strength of herbs varies greatly. Experiment to come up with the best ratios and combinations for your taste preferences.

-For flavor extracts such as almond or vanilla extract, start with 1/4 teaspoon extract per cup of kombucha and adjust to taste. Remember the flavor will continue to develop during the second fermentation period.

Instructions for Bottling Kombucha for a Second Fermentation

1. Remove the SCOBY from the finished kombucha.
2. Add the desired flavoring and mix to combine.
3. Bottle the flavored kombucha in airtight bottles leaving a few inches of head space.
4. Leave the bottled kombucha to ferment for 2-14 days at room temperature.
5. Once the second fermentation process is complete, strain out any solids, if desired, rebottle and store on the counter or in the refrigerator.

Storing Bottled Kombucha

We recommend storing bottled kombucha at room temperature for no longer than 14 days, as carbonation can build up. The more sugar in the flavoring, the faster the carbonation will build. It's a good idea to burp the bottles occasionally during the second fermentation to release excess pressure.

*****Use Caution When Opening Bottles.*** Creation of carbon dioxide during the secondary fermentation period means the contents of the bottle will be under pressure, and caution should be used when opening the bottle. We recommend covering the bottle with a cloth to catch any spraying liquid and opening the bottle slowly over the sink while applying downward pressure.