

How to Make Water Kefir

A Guide

What You Need

- Chlorine-free water (tap water sometimes contains chlorine for disinfection, so I would recommend buying water for water kefir).
- Water kefir grains
- Wooden spoon
- Plastic strainer
- Sugar
- Dried fruit
- Lemons or lemon juice
- A preserving jar (1 L/2.1 pt or larger if needed)
- Optional for secondary fermentation: Juice or fresh fruit



Making Your Own Water Kefir: What You Need to Know

It is important to note that there are two fermentation steps: primary and secondary fermentation. During the primary fermentation, the water kefir grains themselves do the work; these consist of natural yeasts and lactic acid bacteria.

Theoretically, you can drink the water kefir right after the first fermentation. However, you can follow this with a second fermentation (without the water kefir grains) to give the drink more flavor and to carbonate it.

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Instructions for the First Fermentation - Part 1

1. Dissolve two to three tablespoons of sugar in water: Use a little boiled water to dissolve the sugar. Fill the rest with water at room temperature. It is essential that the water is at room temperature before you add the kefir crystals, otherwise they could be damaged. As an alternative to water, you can also use cooled tea or coconut water.
2. Then add the water kefir crystals: Do not use a metal spoon for this. As already mentioned, metal is harmful to the crystals.
3. Add dried fruit: This serves as a source of nitrogen for the bacteria. You can choose whatever you like here. All dried fruits such as dates, apricots, raisins, or figs are suitable. I personally also like mango.
4. Add lemon juice or lemon slices: Finally, add 2-3 untreated lemon slices or their juice. The acid protects the mixture from unwanted bacteria.



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Instructions for the First Fermentation - Part 2

5. Seal the container: Now place the container in a warm place at room temperature. The initial fermentation takes about one to three days. In summer, the whole process is quite quick, while in winter it may take a little longer. This is simply because bacteria work faster at higher temperatures.
6. Bottle the kefir: Now pour the drink into swing-top bottles. If you want to do a second fermentation, don't fill the bottle completely. First, I remove the dried fruit and lemon peel with a wooden spoon. Then I strain the crystals with a plastic sieve. Wash the water kefir crystals with cold water.
7. Clean the utensils: Wash your utensils thoroughly and, if you like, you can start a new batch of water kefir right away. You can repeat the whole process as often as you like. Over time, the crystals will multiply. If you need to take a break, simply place the crystals on a kitchen towel and let them dry. Once dry, you can store them.



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Instructions for Secondary Fermentation

Take the bottled water kefir from the first step and you're ready to go!

- Add juice, fresh fruit, or herbs: Depending on your preference, you can now add fresh juice or fresh fruit. You can also add herbs if you like. Pineapple juice combined with spruce and pine needles makes for a delicious and refreshing combination.
- Set aside for secondary fermentation: After two to four days, your homemade lemonade is ready. Place it in the refrigerator to slow down further fermentation and drink the kefir within a week.
- Caution: The formation of carbon dioxide can build up a lot of pressure in the bottles, so you should open the bottle once a day. This will release the pressure and ensure that the bottle doesn't explode in your face when you open it

