



How to make Water Kefir

Water kefir can be tricky to make the first few times, but once you get the hang of it, it's easy to repeat the process.

NOTE: Water kefir has a 2 part or 2 step fermentation process

Equipment required. You may find you already have most of what's needed at home

1. Measuring cup and spoons
2. Strainer or sieve –plastic or stainless steel with a small mesh, or you will lose the baby grains
3. Jar, bowl or small bucket
4. Spoon – plastic or wood

Ingredients required

1. Water – mineral, borehole, or purified
2. Sugar Brown or white or a mixture of both
3. Use 1 or more of the following depending on your preference:
 - Molasses, bicarb, or boiled egg shell – These are for the minerals which water kefir grains love

Notes regarding equipment

Strainer/sieve – fine mesh plastic/nylon or stainless steel. Aluminum and other metals can leach when coming into contact with acidic liquids such as water kefir. Stainless steel is considered safe for short term contact.

*Strainers with large holes (like pasta strainers/ colanders) don't work well - the smaller grains may pass right through into your kefir drink, rendering it somewhat un-storable - it will continue to ferment quickly in the fridge. Though it's not a health hazard to drink them, you will lose part of your culture (and over-ferment your drink).

Jars, bowls or small bucket, you will need a bowl to capture your strained kefir, a jar and breathable lid to ferment your kefir in, and a jar or bottle for storing your strained kefir in the fridge. I started off using my old coffee glass bottles with the lid resting lightly on the top

Notes regarding Ingredients

Sugar - 1 tablespoon of sugar to be used for every tablespoon of kefir grains to 1 cup of water

White, brown or whole cane sugar (or a combination of these)

Kefir eats sugar, it won't eat honey or stevia or any other sugar replacement. It just wants plain sugar.

Water - 1 cup of water per 1 tablespoon of kefir grains per 1 tablespoon of sugar.

Non or low-chlorinated, high mineral water is preferable. If you are using reverse osmosis water (like Oasis), you will need to add some secret ingredients: You can use either a pinch of bicarb or an egg shell piece from a boiled egg which has lots of minerals or a dash of pink salt – (Himalayan salt). If using borehole water, no minerals are needed

Water kefir has a 2 part ferment process. The first ferment uses your kefir grains.

First Ferment or Step One

1. Take your newly acquired water kefir grains and place them with the liquid they came in into your jar
2. Add your sugar (1 tablespoon of sugar to 1 tablespoon of grains to 1 cup of water)
3. Mix in a pinch of pink salt, molasses or boiled egg shell, unless borehole water
4. Stir and cover
5. Allow to ferment on the kitchen counter for 24 – 48 hours. 24 in summer and 48 in winter
6. Strain the grains off from the water mixture after 24 – 48 hours through the sieve
7. Place the grains aside. These will go into a fresh sugar water mix asap
8. The liquid you have drained off is now full of probiotics. You could drink it as it is. If however you want the delicious fizzy flavoured kefir water Numesa Foods is known for, you need to now move onto the Second Ferment or Step Two - This is when the fizziness happens.

Second Ferment or Step Two (Fizz & Flavour)

Decide on the flavor you want to try. You can use dried fruit, fruit juice or fresh fruit

1. Take the strained off kefir water (first ferment) and add your desired fruit
2. Cover and allow to ferment for 24 hours
3. If you want to strain off the fruit pieces – do it at this stage
4. Bottle – the kefir will keep fermenting from the fruit and this is where the fizz comes from. By closing it into a bottle you catch the fizz.
5. NOTE! Make sure to leave some space in the top of the bottle for the gasses. You can burp your bottle. Leave out of the fridge for a few hours to get the fermentation going and then refrigerate.
6. Drink and enjoy

Optional flavoring ideas:

- o A few slices of ginger – I've found this makes my kefir extra fizzy for some reason
- o 1/2 lime or lemon and fresh mint – so refreshing!
- o 1-2 teaspoons vanilla extract for a cream soda experience
- o You can find recipes for cherry limeade, mango colada, blackberry lavender and more on Google

The choices for flavouring are endless.

Your water kefir grains will multiply if happy. Keep using the rule of thumb 1:1:1. So if you now have 2 tablespoons of grains, you can now make 2 cups (500ml water) to 2 tablespoons of sugar.

When you have the right amount for you, separate out the extra grains. Keep a back-up batch in the fridge with some sugar and water. These grains will hibernate, but they will need fresh food (sugar) every 2 – 3 weeks. The extra's can be eaten, added to smoothies, shared with friends, fed to the dogs or put into your compost. If you share with your friends, be sure to give them these instructions.

Numesa Proprietary Limited, Registration No 2017/275837/07, VAT No 4040282735

Tel 082 854 5641, info@numesa.co.za

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