

Tips For Making Water Kefir

What is Water Kefir

- Kefir water is made by adding kefir grains to sugar water
- Water kefir grains (also known as Tibicos) are a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeasts held in a polysaccharide biofilm matrix created by the bacteria. The microbes act in symbiosis to maintain a stable culture, feeding off the sugar to produce lactic acid, alcohol (ethanol), and carbon dioxide gas, which carbonates the drink.

-Wikipedia

How Is Water Kefir Made?

- Water kefir is made with an anaerobic process (without oxygen)
- The grains are submerged in the water that has been mixed with sugar, preventing them from being exposed to oxygen
- The water is fermented with the grains in an air tight jar for 24-48 hours
- During this time pH level will drop to at least 5 as lactic acid is produced

Making Water Kefir

- During this process, carbon dioxide is produced, creating a gas inside the jar and giving the kefir a fizzy taste
- Good bacteria and yeasts are both contributing to the process and both grow in number over the 24-48 hours
- Once the process is complete, the grains are strained out and can be used to make a new batch

Making Water Kefir

- There is no purpose in fermenting past 48 hours with the grains still in the water
- The grains will starve and start to degrade if they do not get fed new sugar
- Doing so will prevent the grain from multiplying – which fully active grains will do
- Do not add more sugar to a kefir water that has been fermented for 48 hours

Making Water Kefir

- Once the grains are removed, a second ferment can occur
- Flavours can be added at this time.
- If using fruit – only do a second ferment for 12 hours
- Water kefir makes a good starter for fermenting vegetables



Equipment Needed

- Clean Glass Jar – Usually 1 quart or 1 litre with lid that can be screwed on tight
- Nylon Mesh Strainer – do not use a metal strainer
- Wooden spoon or plastic spatula – do not use a metal spoon
- Measuring Cup
- Bowl or measuring cup large enough to strain the kefir grains

Ingredients

- Water should be non-chlorinated such as spring water, well water or tap water that has the chlorine removed
- Sugar must be sucrose - organic sugar, sucanat and rapidura, coconut sweetener, palm sugar
- Darker sugars will colour the grains
- Raw honey contains good bacteria which may compete with the kefir grains (pasteurized honey could be used)

Making Water Kefir

- Generally 1 tablespoon water kefir grains will ferment 3-4 cups water and 1/4 cup sugar
- Measure out the water and pour it into the jar
- Add the sugar and let it dissolve (stir with a wooden spoon)
- Add the water kefir grains
- Screw on the lid and let it sit at room temperature at 70 - 85 F degrees to ferment

Making Water Kefir

- After 48 hours, remove the grains by putting the water through a mesh strainer and put the water in the fridge or use as you wish
- Flavours can be added for a second fermentation
- Grains will proliferate faster and the water will be more fizzy if the water kefir is made continuously

Storing The Grains

- Make another batch of kefir with the grains– do not ever rinse with water
- If you do not want to, then add the kefir grains to a ½ cup to 1 cup water and 1 tbsp sugar, in a small jar with a lid and store in the refrigerator
- It can be stored like this for a week.
- Longer storage: Put the grains with ½ cup to 1 cup water and 1 tbsp sugar in a plastic container and freeze – this can be done for up to two month



Making Kefir With Coconut Water

- Frozen coconut water with no additives or preservatives are best
- The coconut water is not ideal and may damage the grains over time so return the grains to water and sugar after 3 batches to refresh them
- Sugar is added (1/4 cup for 3-4 cups coconut water) just like kefir water made with water.

Enjoying Water Kefir

- ½ - 1 cup a day is a standard amount – start slow and make sure you understand how you react to it
- Finding a way to enjoy water kefir is the key
- Smoothies, salad dressing, frozen flavoured popsicles or sorbets, ice cubes, make your own pop
- The key is to find the way that suits your lifestyle and taste