

Homemade Kombucha Recipe

Style: Fermented Tea | ABV: 0.5-2% | Fermentation Time: 7-14 days | Difficulty: Beginner

Recipe Quick Stats

Stat	Value
Style	Fermented Tea
ABV	0.5-2%
Primary Fermentation	7-14 days
Secondary Fermentation	2-5 days (optional)
Batch Size	1 gallon (3.8 liters)
Fermentation Temp	75-85°F (24-29°C)
Total Time	9-21 days
Difficulty	Beginner

Ingredients

For 1 Gallon (3.8 Liters):

- 3-4 tablespoons loose tea or 4-6 tea bags (black tea recommended for beginners)
- 1 cup (200g) white granulated sugar
- 1 SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast)
- 1-2 cups starter liquid (from previous batch or store-bought plain kombucha)
- 3.5 quarts (3.3 liters) filtered water (chlorine-free)

Equipment Needed

Essential:

- 1-gallon glass jar
- Breathable cover (coffee filter, tight-weave cloth, or paper towel)
- Rubber band or string
- Large pot for brewing tea
- Long-handled spoon (wood or plastic, not metal)
- pH strips (ideal range: 2.5-3.5)
- Bottles for storing finished kombucha

Optional:

- Brewing thermometer
- Glass measuring cup
- Small funnel for bottling
- Tiny strainer for bottling

Instructions

Day 1: Brewing Sweet Tea & Starting Fermentation

1. Bring 1 quart (946 ml) filtered water to a boil
2. Remove from heat and stir in 1 cup sugar until completely dissolved
3. Add tea and steep for 3-5 minutes (for black tea)
4. Remove tea bags or strain loose tea
5. Add remaining 2.5 quarts (2.4 liters) room-temperature water
6. Allow tea to cool completely to below 85°F (29°C)
7. Pour cooled sweet tea into glass jar
8. Add 1-2 cups starter liquid
9. Test pH (should be 4.5 or below)
10. Gently place SCOBY on top of liquid
11. Cover jar with breathable cover and secure with rubber band
12. Label with start date
13. Place in warm location (75-85°F / 24-29°C) away from direct sunlight

Days 2-14: Primary Fermentation

1. Leave undisturbed, observing for:
 - New SCOBY formation
 - Increasingly tangy smell
 - Small bubbles rising
2. After 7 days, taste test with a clean straw:
 - If too sweet, continue fermenting
 - If balanced between sweet and tart, ready to bottle
3. Fermentation is complete when:
 - Flavor balances sweetness and acidity to your preference
 - pH reads 2.5-3.5
 - Typically between 7-14 days depending on temperature

Secondary Fermentation (Optional, 2-5 days)

1. Thoroughly clean and sanitize flip-top bottles
2. Add flavoring ingredients to bottles (1-2 tablespoons per 16 oz bottle)
3. Fill bottles with kombucha, leaving 1-inch headspace
4. Seal bottles tightly
5. Leave at room temperature for 2-5 days
6. "Burp" bottles daily by briefly opening to release pressure
7. When desired carbonation is reached, refrigerate to slow fermentation

Starting Next Batch

1. Reserve 1-2 cups of kombucha as starter liquid
2. Keep SCOBY (both original and new growth)
3. Clean fermentation vessel
4. Repeat brewing process

Popular Flavor Combinations (Per 16 oz Bottle)

- **Ginger-Lemon:** 2 tsp grated ginger + 1 tsp lemon juice
- **Blueberry-Lavender:** 1 tbsp blueberry puree + ¼ tsp dried lavender
- **Pineapple-Mint:** 1 tbsp pineapple juice + 2-3 fresh mint leaves
- **Hibiscus-Strawberry:** 1 tsp dried hibiscus + 2-3 sliced strawberries
- **Apple-Cinnamon:** 1 tbsp apple juice + small cinnamon stick
- **Turmeric-Ginger:** 1 tsp grated turmeric + 1 tsp grated ginger

Troubleshooting

Mold Growth

- **Signs:** Fuzzy patches in green, white, black, or blue
- **Action:** Discard everything and start fresh
- **Prevention:** Ensure proper pH, use sufficient starter liquid

Too Sour

- **Cause:** Fermented too long or at high temperature
- **Solution:** Shorten fermentation time for future batches
- **Fix:** Dilute with fresh sweet tea or fruit juice

Weak Carbonation

- **Cause:** Insufficient sugar or short secondary fermentation
 - **Solution:** Add 1 tsp sugar per bottle or increase secondary fermentation time
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