

## Making Kombucha

Kombucha is a sweetened tea that has been fermented by a SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast). It originates from ancient China and has health benefits such as:

1. Detoxification
2. Joint care
3. Aids digestion and gut health
4. Immune boosting

(Source: <http://www.foodrenegade.com/kombucha-health-benefits/>)

*Read more at:*

<http://www.foodrenegade.com/kombucha-health-benefits/>

<http://www.kombu.de/val-gwf.htm>

<http://www.gaiaresearch.co.za/kombucha.html>

<http://www.acupuncture.com/herbs/kombucha1.htm>

[http://www.gokombucha.com/health\\_benefits.html](http://www.gokombucha.com/health_benefits.html)

*Supplies:*

half gallon glass jars (or larger/smaller, just adjust the ingredients accordingly)

2/3 cup sugar

1 T loose caffeinated tea

OR

3-4 tea bags

SCOBY, sitting in leftover kombucha from previous batch

Step One:

Wash jars in hot water. You want the jars to be sterilized.

Step Two:

Boil your water. While it's boiling, put sugar and tea into your jars. If you are using loose tea, you can tie it into a coffee filter with string or thread. There really is a lot of freedom to kombucha making. Use different flavor teas, green or black. It just needs to be caffeinated. Also, the sugar can be tweaked as well - organic can be used and some only use 1/2 cup sugar for this size jar.

Step Three:

Pour boiling water over tea and sugar. Leave about 1 and 1/2 inches of head space. This allows some room for the SCOBY to grow and some bubbling to occur. **Cool completely.** Heat will kill the SCOBY and ruin your batch. A lot of times I steep right before I go to bed and allow it to cool overnight, adding the SCOBY the next morning.

Step Four:

After the tea has cooled completely, remove the tea bags. Avoid using metal or wood. I usually just use my clean hands to grab them out. Dump in SCOBY with at least 1/4 cup of kombucha from previous batch.

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### Step Five:

Cover with cheesecloth, coffee filter, or towel and elastic band to top. The SCOBY needs to breathe but you want to keep out the bugs! Allow to sit at room temperature for at least 10 days. We like 2 weeks. The longer you allow it to sit, the greater the health benefits, but the stronger the taste. It will become more and more vinegar-like the longer it sits. Experiment a little and see how you like it.

### Step Six:

When you are ready to finish the kombucha, remove the SCOBY. Place into another glass, sterilized jar. Pour in a little kombucha for the SCOBY to sit in and keep covered with towel until your ready for the next batch. I just place mine in the same jar each time - they increase in number quickly! Soon you will be either giving them away or throwing them out.

### Step Seven:

Pour about 1/2 cup juice or some fresh cut fruit into the kombucha. Again, this is optional and you can experiment with different juices and fruits and amounts. We have found that this step helps with creating a natural carbonation. It will still carbonate without it, but maybe not as well. Our favorite juices have been berry blends and pineapple. I would recommend using at least 100% juice with NO HFCS. Organic would be awesome but even I don't afford that. Best fruits we've tried have been fresh pineapple and fresh peaches. Pour into whatever jars you plan to seal the kombucha in and cap.

### Step Eight:

Allow kombucha to sit out at room temperature for about 3 more days. This allows the carbonation to build. Finally, place in the fridge and drink when ready!

### *Notes:*

- Another small SCOBY will form in the bottles and there will be some leftover SCOBY pieces. You may want to pour it through a small sieve when you serve. My kids especially find it somewhat thrilling yet disgusting to find the SCOBY swimming in their cup!
- A new SCOBY will form at the top of your SCOBY each time you make a batch, creating layers. After 7 uses, the bottom SCOBY will no longer "work". It won't harm the remaining SCOBY but once the bottom gets a sort of used, brownish, dead look, I tear it off and throw it away.
- You can tear layers off the SCOBY to start more batches. You can also cut up the first one you have to make more than one jar. It doesn't take much for it to grow!
- I like to stagger my batches so we always have some to drink. Every few days I brew another batch of tea and start fermenting the kombucha. I mark each jar with a date so I know when to complete the process.

### Curious about:

Pregnancy and Kombucha? <http://www.foodrenegade.com/is-kombucha-safe-when-pregnant-or-nursing/>

<http://brewdrkombucha.com/fakqs.html>

Little ones and Kombucha? [http://vegetarian.lovetoknow.com/Is\\_Kombucha\\_Tea\\_Good\\_for\\_Kids](http://vegetarian.lovetoknow.com/Is_Kombucha_Tea_Good_for_Kids)  
<http://www.domesticdiva.ca/childrens-health/kombucha-and-kids-is-it-safe/>