

Kombucha Starter Kit

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Kombucha is a super healthy fermented drink made from sweetened tea and a SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture of Yeast and Bacteria). The yeasts eat the sugar and produce alcohol, and the bacteria eats the alcohol and produce acid. Because of this process kombucha contains very low sugar, and <1% alcohol. Since you'll no longer be in the Fablab where the kombucha is made for you, it's time to make your own.

How to brew your own kombucha:

You'll need:

5g Tea
60g Sugar
1 SCOBY
0,15L Starter liquid
0,75L Water*

1 Rubber band
1 Piece of fabric* (a coffee-filter also works)
1L Glass jar*
Round glass bottles* (Grolsch beer bottles are perfect, but other glass bottles will work fine)

*not included

First we'll prepare the tea.

1. Boil half of the water.
2. Add the sugar to the boiling water and stir until it's dissolved.
3. Add the tea and let it sit for 10-15min.
4. Remove the tea and add the remaining (cold) water.
5. Wait until the temperature of the sweetened tea is below 30°
6. Poor the sweetened tea in the glass jar (you could also make the tea directly in the jar but make sure your jar can handle boiling water. I ruined a lot of jars this way ;)).
7. Add the starter liquid and the SCOBY (after adding the SCOBY and liquid, make sure the kombucha doesn't come in contact with reactive metals. It's best to use a wooden spoon, and if you want to strain the kombucha; a plastic strainer).
8. Seal the jar with a piece of fabric and a rubber band. The kombucha needs oxygen to ferment, but you don't want flies in your brew.

And now we wait...

Kombucha needs around 10-15 days to ferment depending on temperature. Place the jar in a nice warm spot (preferably around 25°). Avoid direct sunlight. During fermentation a new SCOBY will form on top of the kombucha. You can give one of your SCOBY's to your friend/fam/neighbours and have them start brewing as well!

You can start tasting the kombucha around day 7. The kombucha is done when it's tasting a little sour, but still pleasant. When you like the taste of your 'butch it's time for 2nd fermentation.

9. Remove both SCOBY's. Reserve some of the kombucha as a starter liquid for a next batch.

10. Put the kombucha in the glass bottles. You can now add fruit/herbs/fruit juice to flavour the kombucha.
11. (Skip this step if you've added fruit/fruit juice) Add a spoon of sugar to each bottle and shake or stir to dissolve. This will give the yeast a little extra food to make your kombucha fizzy.
12. Let the bottles ferment for 3-5 days on room temperature.
13. Put the bottles in the fridge and wait one or two more days before drinking. This will ensure that the CO_2 is better preserved.
14. You've just made your first batch of kombucha! You can use your SCOBY and starter liquid to make a new batch

When you don't want to make a new batch of kombucha but want to keep your SCOBY healthy, you can put the SCOBY in a small jar with some plain kombucha. Seal the jar with a piece of fabric and make sure the SCOBY stays submerged in the kombucha. You can add some tea with sugar when needed. Use this liquid as a starter for your new batch.

Now some of my favourite recipes I've made in the Fablab:

Watermelon & cayenne: Add 1/6th part of watermelon puree/juice and 1 teaspoon of cayenne to 5/6 parts kombucha before 2nd fermentation

Turmeric & black pepper: Slice a piece of turmeric the size of your thumb, and add it together with 10 whole black peppercorns to the kombucha before 2nd fermentation.

Lemon & mint: Add 1 spoon of sugar, 4 slices of lemon and 15g of mint to the kombucha before 2nd fermentation

Mango, rosemary & lemon: Add 1/2 mango, 2 branches of rosemary and 2 slices of lemon kombucha before 2nd fermentation

Kombucha Mojito: Make the lemon & mint kombucha. Add 30ml of white rum, 1tsp of sugar, 90ml of kombucha and a splash of sparkling water to a glass filled with ice-cubes. Stir and garnish with a slice of lime and a few leaves of mint.