

## Water Kefir

By

Mary Ann Hastings @ [CookingForYourLifestyle.com](http://CookingForYourLifestyle.com)

1. Put about a cup of spring or filtered water in a [quart-size ball jar](#) and put in microwave for 30 seconds.
2. Add ¼ cup [organic white sugar](#) to the jar and swirl to dissolve sugar. You can also use organic unprocessed Rapadura sugar. Because of its anti-bacterial properties, honey isn't good for the Kefir grains growth, so don't use honey-ever.
3. Add spring water to the jar, leaving about 3 inches of head room at the top.
4. If sugar hasn't entirely dissolved, give the jar a stir with a plastic spoon until it has. At this point, the water should be at room temperature and sugar dissolved. Do NOT use metal in working with water kefir; the kefir grains don't like it.
5. Add hydrated [water kefir grains](#) to the jar and either put a ball jar lid, a towel, cheesecloth or coffee filter (held tight with a rubber band) on it. (The towel or cheesecloth method is simply to prevent ants from getting into the sugary liquid that's inside the jar.) I think it's easier just to put the lid on the jar than to mess with the cloth and rubber band, but it's a matter of personal preference.
6. Leave on the counter (preferably at 70-75 degrees) for 24-48 hours. (On top of the frig is a good place in cold months). The longer you leave it, the more sugar is eaten by the kefir grains through fermentation. So, if you are limiting carbs, go with 48 hours.
7. Re-start the process after the 48 hours by pouring the liquid off of the grains into a plastic mesh sieve on top of an empty jar. Jar should be big enough to hold that amount of liquid. Dissolve more sugar in water in a new jar, add cool water, and add the rinsed off water kefir grains to that jar of new sugar water.

### MAKE WATER KEFIR CARBONATED (often called the second ferment)

1. To make the Water Kefir carbonated, pour a couple of ounces of fruit juice into the water kefir you just strained. I like using whole blueberries or ginger, with ginger being my favorite. Citrus isn't recommended because it makes stringy yeast-like things that are not tasty. Once you've added the juice or the whole fruit, cover the jars tightly with an air tight lid and leave on the counter an additional 1-3 days before drinking or refrigerating. Repeat the process as your kefir grains grow and multiply. You should have ¼ to ½ cup of grains per quart-sized jar.

## VARIATIONS

After the first fermentation, cap the water without adding any juice. After two days, put in the fridge and add vanilla extract before drinking for a cream soda taste.

Add lemon juice right after the first fermentation to make it taste like lemonade.

Do the second fermentation with grape, apple, cherry or pomegranate for a fizzy fruit flavored soda.

Add raisins or prune juice for the second fermentation for a Dr. Pepper taste. (I've found that the length of time it maintains the sweet taste of Dr. Pepper before it turns quite sour is very short). If you really want to do it, you'll have to be patient and work at it until you get it down pat.)

Make a grape or berry flavored second fermentation and mix with iced herbal tea for carbonated fruity iced tea drink.

Add pineapple juice after the first fermentation, but drink right away. Don't allow it to ferment or it gets slimy.