

How to Make Kefir

Kefir grains are a living organism and a popular culture for fermenting milk. The fermentation process produces a drink, which is thicker than milk and if prepared properly, it is bubbly, tangy and full of beneficial probiotics. Kefir contains high levels of vitamin B12, calcium, magnesium, vitamin K2, biotin, folate, enzymes and probiotics in particular. The fermenting process also changes some of the protein structures in the milk, making it easier to digest. Kefir is a fermented product similar in many ways to yoghurt but instead of heating the milk, adding a culture and keeping it warm, as with yoghurt, all you need to make milk kefir are kefir grains.

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon kefir starter grains

1L organic whole milk (the more milk you use, the longer the kefir will take to brew - you can use raw or pasteurized milk however if you use raw milk you will need to regularly stir your kefir)

Clean glass jar

Muslin cloth & rubber band

Useful Resources:

The Art of Fermentation by Sandor Katz



Method:

1. Add 1 heaped tablespoon kefir grains into approximately 1 litre organic fresh whole milk (cold or at room temperature) in a clean glass jar and cover with a muslin cloth, secured with a rubber band.
2. Store your brew somewhere out of direct sunlight and away from a direct heat source but where the ambient room temperature is warm (the colder the grains are the longer the kefir will take to brew) for 24-48 hours. Shake or stir occasionally.
3. During this time, the healthy cultures will ferment the milk, preventing it from spoiling while transforming it into kefir.
4. After 24-48 hours stir the kefir mixture with a plastic utensil and pour the contents through a fine plastic sieve (NB don't use metal).
5. For the first couple of brews nothing much may happen as it can take a while for the grains to settle, however the taste and texture will gradually improve, the more brews you make. The kefir should be thick and have a sour, tangy taste.

To make your next brew:

1. Strain the kefir grains out from the kefir
2. Add the grains back into a clean jar
3. Add milk
4. Cover and leave until desired consistency is reached.

Looking after your kefir grains:

The grains double every week to 10 days. You can store extras or share them, without having to keep feeding them, by drying them. Rinse them, drain on absorbent paper, and dry in the sun or a dehydrator at low temperature. You can slow kefir grains growth down in the fridge, but you will still need to feed them after about a week. You can suspend them for longer by freezing them. But kefir grains work best, and stay healthiest, with frequent engagement and regular feeding.

NB Chlorinated water can inhibit fermentation so use spring, distilled or filtered water if you can.