

■ 1-Liter Kombucha

From Store-Bought Starter · Sweetened with Raw Honey

Ingredients

Ingredient	Amount
Store-bought raw kombucha (with sediment)	1 cup
Plain green or black tea bags	2 bags
Raw honey	3 tbsp
Filtered water (non-chlorinated)	2¾ cups
Fruit tea bags (for second ferment)	1 bag
Raw honey — for second ferment, per bottle	1 tsp

Steps

1. Brew the Base Tea	Boil 2¾ cups of filtered water. Steep 2 plain green or black tea bags for 5–7 minutes, then remove. Use plain tea only — fruit teas alone don't have enough tannins to support SCOBY formation.
2. Cool and Add Honey	Let the tea cool to below 90°F before stirring in 3 tbsp of raw honey until fully dissolved. Never add honey to hot liquid — heat above 105°F destroys its beneficial enzymes and wild yeasts.
3. Combine in the Mason Jar	Pour the cooled sweet tea into your clean 1-liter wide-mouth mason jar. Add 1 cup of raw kombucha including all the sediment. The jar should be about 80–90% full with 1–2 inches of headspace at the top.
4. Cover and Ferment (F1)	Cover the mouth with a coffee filter or paper towel secured with a rubber band — no airtight lid. Place in a warm spot (72–80°F) away from direct sunlight. A SCOBY pellicle will begin forming on the surface within 2–4 days. Ferment for 10–14 days with honey.

5. Taste and Harvest	Starting around day 7, taste daily by slipping a clean straw under the SCOBY. When pleasantly tangy with a hint of sweetness, it's ready. Remove the SCOBY and reserve ½–1 cup of finished liquid as starter for your next batch.
6. Second Ferment for Fizz (Optional)	Pour finished kombucha into a swing-top bottle. Brew 1 fruit tea bag strong, cool it, and add 1–2 oz to the bottle. Add 1 tsp raw honey for carbonation fuel. Seal tightly and leave at room temp for 2–3 days, burping once daily to release pressure. Then refrigerate and enjoy within 2–4 weeks.

Notes & Tips

Honey vs. sugar: Honey ferments slower than cane sugar — expect 10–14 days vs. 7–10. Never add to hot liquid.

Mold check: A healthy SCOBY is beige, white, or light brown. Fuzzy green, black, or pink spots = mold → discard the whole batch.

Temperature: Below 68°F fermentation stalls. Above 85°F you may get overly vinegary results. South Florida room temp is usually ideal.

Starter ratio: 1 cup starter in a 1-liter jar is ~25% — intentionally high for a first batch to lower pH and protect against mold.

Crystallized honey: Warm the jar gently in a bowl of warm (not hot) water to reliquefy, then cool before using.

SCOBY hotel: Store your harvested SCOBY submerged in starter liquid in a covered jar in the fridge. It can last months between batches.

Good luck with your first batch! ■