

Homemade Yogurt

Learn to make creamy homemade yogurt with just milk and starter culture. Simple 3-step process for fresh, healthy yogurt at home.

15 min

PREP

10 min

COOK

25 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Homemade Yogurt

Ingredients

- 4 cup milk
- 0.5 cup plain yogurt

Instructions

- 1 Heat the milk**

Pour 4 cups whole milk into a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Heat over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the milk reaches 185°F (85°C) - this should take about 8-10 minutes.
- 2** Remove the saucepan from heat and let the milk cool to 115°F (46°C), stirring occasionally to prevent a skin from forming - this will take about 15-20 minutes.
- 3 Prepare starter culture**

Whisk 0.5 cup plain yogurt with 1/4 cup of the cooled milk in a small bowl until completely smooth with no lumps.
- 4** Pour the yogurt mixture back into the remaining milk and whisk thoroughly until completely combined.
- 5** Pour the milk mixture into clean glass jars or containers, leaving about 1/2 inch of headspace. Cover tightly with lids.
- 6 Incubate the yogurt**

Place the covered containers in a warm location maintaining 100-110°F (38-43°C) - an oven with just the light on works well. Incubate for 6-8 hours without disturbing until the yogurt is thick and tangy.
- 7** Refrigerate the yogurt for at least 4 hours before serving to allow it to fully set and chill.

Tips

Use a thermometer to ensure milk cools to exactly 110-115°F (43-46°C) before adding starter culture – this temperature range is crucial for proper fermentation.

Save 1/2 cup of your finished yogurt as starter for the next batch, but don't use homemade starter more than 4-5 times as the culture strength diminishes.

Wrap your yogurt container in towels and place in a slightly warm oven (with just the light on) to maintain consistent temperature during fermentation.

For thicker yogurt, add 1-2 tablespoons of powdered milk to the heated milk before cooling – this increases protein content and creates better texture.

Strain finished yogurt through cheesecloth for 2-4 hours to make Greek-style yogurt, saving the whey for baking or smoothies.

Test doneness by gently tilting the container – properly set yogurt should move as one cohesive mass rather than sloshing like liquid.

Avoid disturbing the yogurt during the first 4 hours of fermentation, as movement can break the delicate protein structure forming.

If your yogurt separates, whisk in the whey before refrigerating – separation is natural but stirring creates smoother texture.