

How to make your own probiotic Yoghurt

Eating live yoghurt has many benefits. It's both a good probiotic and a useful source of protein. You can buy live yoghurt, often described as 'bio live', but it's cheaper, and very easy, to make your own.

You will need:

- Milk. This can be whole milk, semi skimmed or skimmed. If you use skimmed milk the texture may not be quite as good as with a higher fat milk. How much milk? A pint of milk will make a pint of fairly thin yoghurt. If you prefer a thicker, Greek-style yoghurt, you'll end up with about half a pint for every pint of milk you use.
- Bio-live plain yoghurt, available from any supermarket. You'll need 2 tablespoons for every pint of milk you use.
- Somewhere warm for the yoghurt to ferment at a constant temperature. A vacuum flask works well (make sure you have one large enough for the amount of milk you're going to use), or a warm airing cupboard would also work.



Method:

1. Heat the milk to not quite boiling. You'll need to keep a careful eye on it – if it does come to the boil it probably won't make yoghurt.
2. Allow the milk to cool until you can comfortably hold your finger in it – it should feel pleasantly warm.
3. Stir in 2 tablespoons of live yoghurt for every pint of milk.
4. Pour this into a vacuum flask, or place in a warm airing cupboard, and leave for 8 hours or overnight.
5. You should now have a thin yoghurt, and if this is how you want it you're done. If you prefer a thicker, Greek-style yoghurt, you now need to strain it.
6. Line a sieve or colander with a clean tea towel folded in two. Place this over a bowl or large jug.
7. Pour the yoghurt in and leave until most of the whey drains out. When the yoghurt has reached the consistency you want, decant it into a container to keep in the fridge. You may have to strain it in several batches, depending on how large your sieve is and how much yoghurt you've made.

You can start your next batch with the last of the current batch. I tend to find that the ferment 'drifts' over time – I generally need to buy a new pot of commercially produced yoghurt to start every 4th or 5th batch.