

Nine Syrups to Make at Home

Most take ten minutes of work and keep for weeks. Pour each one into a clean bottle, label it with the date and keep it in the fridge.

BEFORE YOU START

1:1 means equal parts. By volume, 1 cup sugar to 1 cup water; by weight, 200 g to 200 g, which is a little sweeter. Both work: pick one and keep to it.

Throw a syrup out if it fizzes, smells sour, grows mold or, in a clear syrup, turns cloudy.

THE BASICS

Simple syrup 1 : 1

1 cup (200 g) sugar and 1 cup (240 ml) water. Warm the water, stir in the sugar until clear and let it cool. No stove? Shake both in a jar until the sugar dissolves.

Makes about 1½ cups · keeps 1 month · Daiquiri, Mojito, Tom Collins

Rich syrup 2 : 1

2 cups (400 g) sugar and 1 cup (240 ml) water. Warm gently and stir until completely clear: this one needs the heat. Bars weigh it: 400 g sugar to 200 g water.

Keeps up to 6 months · sweeter, so use ⅔ as much as simple syrup

Honey syrup

½ cup (120 ml) honey and ½ cup (120 ml) hot water. Stir until smooth; no need to cook it. For a richer syrup, use 2 parts honey to 1 of water.

Keeps 1 month · Bee's Knees, Gold Rush, Brown Derby

Demerara syrup

1 cup (about 200 g) demerara, turbinado or light brown sugar and 1 cup (240 ml) water. Warm and stir until dissolved. Deeper and toffee-like; make it 2 : 1 for a rich version.

Keeps 1 month · Old Fashioned, Irish Coffee, Jungle Bird

Ginger syrup

1 cup (200 g) sugar, 1 cup (240 ml) water and a 4-inch (10 cm) piece of fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced. Simmer 10 minutes, steep 30 minutes off the heat, strain.

Keeps 2 weeks · with soda water it stands in for ginger beer



SPICED, FRUITY AND NUTTY

Cinnamon syrup

1 cup (200 g) sugar, 1 cup (240 ml) water and 3 cinnamon sticks, broken. Bring to a simmer and stir until clear, then cover off the heat and steep at least 1 hour, or overnight. Strain.

Keeps 1 month · Zombie and other tiki drinks, a Hot Toddy

Grenadine

1 cup (240 ml) 100% pomegranate juice and 1 cup (200 g) sugar. Warm just until the sugar dissolves; don't boil. For depth, stir in 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses and ½ tsp orange flower water.

Keeps 2 weeks · Tequila Sunrise, Jack Rose, Shirley Temple

Quick orgeat

1 cup (240 ml) unsweetened almond milk and 1 cup (200 g) sugar. Warm and stir until dissolved, take off the heat, then add ½ tsp orange flower water and ¼ tsp almond extract.

Keeps 2 weeks; shake before use · Mai Tai, Fog Cutter, Japanese Cocktail

Oleo saccharum

Peel 4 lemons with a Y-peeler, taking no white pith. Toss the peels with the same weight of sugar, about ¼ cup (50 g), cover and leave a few hours or overnight, pressing now and then, until the sugar turns to a fragrant syrup. Strain.

Keeps 2 weeks · punch, Whiskey Sour, lemonade

SWEETENERS, MEASURE FOR MEASURE

INSTEAD OF ¾ OZ SIMPLE SYRUP	USE
Rich syrup 2 : 1	½ oz (15 ml)
Honey syrup 1 : 1	¾ oz (22.5 ml)
Maple syrup	a little less: ½ oz, then taste
Sugar	1 tbsp, stirred into the citrus



Citrus and syrup, a free lesson

24cocktails.com/academy/technique/citrus

Cocktail Substitutions

What bartenders reach for when a bottle, a fruit or a tool is missing. Every swap changes the drink a little: taste it, and adjust the sugar.

SPIRITS, LIQUEURS AND WINE

OUT OF	USE
Cointreau	Another good triple sec or orange curaçao; cheaper ones run sweeter.
Sweet vermouth	Another rosso vermouth; an amaro, as in a Black Manhattan; or cream sherry.
Dry vermouth	Blanc vermouth, which is sweeter, or a fino sherry: drier and nuttier.
Rye whiskey	Bourbon, and the reverse: rye is spicier, bourbon rounder and sweeter.
Cognac	Another grape brandy: Armagnac or a good American brandy.
Blanco tequila	Reposado, rounder and oakier; or mezcal, smoky: try half and half.
Campari	Another red bitter aperitivo. Aperol makes a lighter, sweeter drink.
Lillet Blanc	A blanc vermouth.
Absinthe rinse	Pastis or another anise spirit.
Champagne	Cava or crémant, made the same way, or a dry (brut) prosecco.

MIXERS, FRUIT AND EGGS

OUT OF	USE
Egg white	Aquafaba, the liquid from canned chickpeas: ½–¾ oz (15–22.5 ml).
Lime or lemon	Each other, the same amount: lime is sharper, lemon rounder.
Ginger beer	¾ oz (22.5 ml) ginger syrup and 3 oz (90 ml) soda water; ginger ale is milder.
Soda water	Seltzer or sparkling mineral water. Not tonic: it is sweet and bitter.
Grapefruit soda	2 oz (60 ml) grapefruit juice, ½ oz (15 ml) simple syrup, 2 oz (60 ml) soda water.
Heavy cream	Half-and-half, for a lighter drink.
Cream of coconut	Coconut cream sweetened to taste with simple syrup.
Espresso	Cold brew concentrate, the same amount; the foam will be thinner.
Orgeat	Simple syrup with a drop of almond extract, or the quick orgeat on page 1.
Orange bitters	A strip of orange peel, expressed.

TOOLS, AND WHAT WILL DO INSTEAD

- **Shaker**
a jar with a tight lid
- **Jigger**
a tablespoon is ½ oz; two make 1 oz
- **Citrus press**
a fork twisted into the halved fruit
- **Mixing glass**
a pint glass or the shaker's large tin
- **Bar spoon**
a long teaspoon or a chopstick
- **Crushed ice**
cubes in a clean towel and a rolling pin
- **Strainer**
the lid held ajar; a tea strainer for fine bits
- **Muddler**
the handle end of a wooden spoon
- **Y-peeler**
any vegetable peeler

SWAPS THAT DON'T WORK

Bottled lime or lemon juice for fresh: it tastes flat.
Tonic for soda water, or the reverse.
Sweet vermouth for dry, or the reverse.
Coconut milk for cream of coconut: it has no sugar.



Every ingredient, explained
24cocktails.com/ingredients

