

# Watermelon Agua Fresca

A recipe from Gail Reitenbach inspired by  
*Optics: A Novel About Women and Work and Midlife Muddles*

Traditionally, *agua fresca* (“fresh water”) includes sugar or a simple syrup, but watermelon is already super sweet and needs, in my opinion, only a counterbalance of lime. If you have a serious sweet tooth, feel free to add a bit of sugar. (I find agave and honey adulterate the melon flavor too much.)

*Agua fresca* comes in more- and less-diluted versions. If you’re watching calories, dilute with more ice or water.

I never measure the proportions of melon, lime, and ice when I make this, but I did test these proportions. Start here and adjust to taste.

## Ingredients for 1 to 3 servings (makes about 1.5 cups)

1.5 cups of cold, seedless watermelon cubes

1 tablespoon fresh-squeezed lime juice\*

1/2 cup of ice cubes

1 teaspoon sugar (if you must)

## Directions

Puree all ingredients in a blender. Taste. Add lime juice or sweetener. Consume immediately or refrigerate, covered, for no more than one day. Stir before serving, and add ice as desired.

## Options

- Garnish with a lime slice and/or mint sprig. You can also add a few mint leaves (no stems) to the blender ingredients if you love mint.
- Stir in ½ to 1 tablespoon of chia seeds (preferably, previously powdered in a dry blender) for a healthy (if sugar-free) afternoon pick-me-up.
- Pour ½ cup undiluted *agua fresca* from recipe above into a glass and top with sparkling or still water and ice.
- Pour ½ cup undiluted *agua fresca* from recipe above into a glass and add 1 ounce tequila (I’m partial to añejo) and ice.

\* Limes are the most difficult citrus fruit to juice. If you don’t have a heavy-duty manual lime squeezer, just use your hands. First, roll the lime on the countertop for a few seconds, applying heavy pressure. Then slice the lime in half and use your fingers and palm to squeeze the juice into a container or directly into the blender. Look for limes with bright, green skin that are heavy for their size. There’s nothing sadder than a dry lime.

From <https://gailreitenbach.com>, where you can find more information about  
*Optics: A Novel About Women and Work and Midlife Muddles*.