

MAKE YOUR OWN SAUERKRAUT



Cabbage is **Queen of the Crock!** Sauerkraut is fairly easy to make using a fermentation crock. They typically include weights, also known as secondary followers, to keep the cabbage submerged under the brine. **If you don't have a crock**, you can use a food grade plastic bucket or mason jar.

1

To start, wash your hands, fermentation vessel, knife and cutting board with soap and warm water. **Do not use antimicrobial soaps** as they may inhibit the fermentation process. **Wash the cabbage in cool water.**

Save a few whole cabbage leaves to use to help hold the shredded cabbage under the brine. These leaves are called **primary followers** and help to hold all the tiny bits of cabbage below the brine. Set the leaves aside.



FERMENTATION CROCK



PRIMARY FOLLOWER

2

Cut the washed cabbage into **4 wedges** and remove the core from each piece. Next, slice the cabbage into thin strips.

For every 3 pounds of cabbage, add 1 ½ tablespoons of sea salt. Don't use iodized salt. You can weigh the cabbage at the store or farmer's market if you don't have a scale at home.

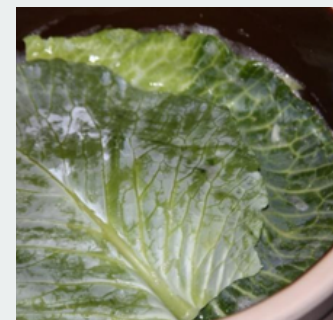


3

Remember to wash your hands before starting this step, and do not use antimicrobial soaps. **Sprinkle the salt over the shredded cabbage** and, using your hands, **massage the salt into the cabbage.** Keep massaging until the cabbage is limp and a brine begins forming in the bottom of the bowl.

Once the cabbage looks wet and starts to glisten, it is ready to pack into a fermentation vessel. As you pack the crock or jar, **firmly press down on the cabbage** to remove any air pockets or bubbles. As you press down firmly, you'll see the brine increasing. Once the crock is filled, press down firmly, and you should see the **brine cover the cabbage.** You will want to make sure not to fill the crock or jar completely full. Be sure to leave a few inches at the top. This is called headspace. You need room for the weight, or secondary follower, to keep the kraut submerged in the brine.

Next, **place the primary follower** (reserved cabbage leaves), over the packed cabbage.



4

Place the secondary follower over the cabbage leaves. Press down firmly to submerge the cabbage in the brine. If you don't have a crock, you can do this process with a plate and a ziplock bag filled with water.

Cover the crock with a dish towel and **place in a cool spot, ideally 55-75°.** Check the crock everyday to make sure the cabbage is submerged. If it isn't, press it back down below the brine. You will see some scum on top, which is generally harmless, but scoop out any mold you see.

A small batch of sauerkraut may take **just a week to ferment**, while a large batch **may take a month.** It is very important to keep everything below the brine - **submerge in brine and all will be fine!**

Taste your sauerkraut every few days. When it is done, it should taste pleasingly sour and pickled -- it **should not taste acidic or vinegary.** Throw the first follower, the cabbage leaves, away -- you may need to scoop a layer off the top to get to the first follower. The remaining cabbage should be white or slightly yellow, yet slightly firm and crisp. **Remember, don't eat the kraut if it looks slimy or smells rotten.**



4

It is best to **use plastic or glass lids, instead of metal, if you plan to store your fermented vegetables for longer than a month.** Select glass jars with lids and wash them in hot soapy water and dry well. Pack the jars firmly with your hands. You want to **push the sauerkraut below the brine for storage.**

Store the sauerkraut in sealed containers in the refrigerator. The sauerkraut should stay fresh-tasting and crunchy, and **can last in the refrigerator for 6-12 months.**

Enjoy!

