

SAUERKRAUT

Yield: 1 quart

INGREDIENTS

1½ lbs. cabbage
1 scant Tbsp canning salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. For the best sauerkraut, use firm heavy heads of fresh cabbage. Wash cabbage under cold running water. Peel off the outermost leaf or two. Save this to top your shredded cabbage in the fermentation jar. Cut heads in quarters and remove cores if desired. Shred cabbage into desired thickness and lengths keeping in mind how you are going to eat it. Weigh out 1½ lbs. shredded cabbage in a bowl. Add salt. Mix thoroughly using clean hands.
2. Adding one handful of shredded, salted cabbage at a time, pack into quart jar firmly with a muddler or wooden spoon. Make sure it is completely packed before adding the next handful. Repeat until the entire 1½ lbs. salted cabbage is in the canning jar. Using the outermost leaf that you removed at the beginning of this process, cover the shreds of cabbage and place the weight on top, try your best to keep small pieces from rising to the top. Add brine (¾ tablespoon salt per pint water) to cover by approximately 1 inch. Avoid having the bottom of your airlock sitting in brine—there should be an airspace between the brine and airlock.
3. Add water to the line on the airlock. Place the airlock lid on the jar. Put the jar into a bowl that will capture any spillovers that might happen. This is unlikely with this system.
4. Store at 70°F to 75°F for fermenting. At temperatures between 70°F to 75°F, kraut will be fully fermented in about 3 to 4 weeks; at 60°F to 65°F, fermentation may take 5 to 6 weeks. At temperatures lower than 60°F, kraut may not ferment. Above 75°F, kraut may become soft. Success can be had by fermenting in an unheated garage in mild climates.
5. Do not open the jar until you would like to check for tartness—4 weeks is suggested. If it isn't as tart as you'd like, repack the top as well as possible and give it another week. Fully fermented kraut may be tightly covered in the refrigerator for several months. You can leave it in the jar with the airlock or put a different plastic lid on it to store in the refrigerator. While sauerkraut can be canned, the process would kill any pro-biotic life in the fermentation and make the final product softer.

LOCAL CONTACT

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