

The Only Sauerkraut Recipe I Trust: Simple, Traditional, and Full of Probiotics

Why I Keep Sauerkraut in My Fridge at All Times



TIME
5-10 min

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INGREDIENTS

1 medium green cabbage (about 2 to 2.5 lbs)
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher or sea salt (non-iodized)
Optional: 1 teaspoon caraway seeds, garlic cloves, juniper berries, or shredded carrot
A large mixing bowl
Cutting board + sharp knife
Quart-size glass mason jar or fermentation crock
Small glass or jar that fits inside the mason jar to use as a weight
Cheesecloth or clean towel
Rubber band or string

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Shred the Cabbage:** I start by removing any damaged outer leaves from the cabbage, then cutting it into quarters and removing the core. From there, I slice it into thin shreds using a sharp knife. You can use a mandoline if you want uniform slices, but I usually go freehand.
- 2. Salt and Massage:** I place the shredded cabbage in a large bowl and sprinkle the salt evenly over it. Then comes the key step: massage the cabbage with clean hands for 5-10 minutes. It starts out firm and dry, but as I work it, the salt draws out moisture, turning it into a soft, briny pile.
- 3. By the end, you should have about 3/4 cup of liquid in the bowl-that's your natural brine.**
- 4. Pack It Into the Jar:** Next, I grab a clean mason jar and start packing the cabbage in, pressing it down firmly with a spoon or my fist after each handful. The goal is to remove air pockets and get the cabbage fully submerged in its own brine.
- 5. Once all the cabbage is in, I pour any leftover liquid into the jar. The brine should rise above the cabbage by about 1 inch.**
- 6. Weight It Down:** To keep the cabbage submerged (which is crucial to prevent mold), I place a smaller jar or fermentation weight inside the opening. Then I cover the jar with a clean cloth and secure it with a rubber band.
- 7. If you have a fermentation lid or airlock system, even better-but it's totally optional.**
- 8. Let It Ferment:** Now comes the part where I walk away and let nature do the work. I leave the jar at room

temperature (65-75°F is ideal) out of direct sunlight. I check it daily to press the cabbage back under the brine if needed.

9. Fermentation time depends on your taste and room temperature:
10. 5 days: Mild, lightly sour kraut
11. 14 days: More complex and tangy
12. weeks: Deep, funky flavor with stronger probiotic content
13. I usually start tasting around day 5 and refrigerate it once it hits my sweet spot.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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