

SAUERKRAUT- NWFerments.com

- 1 medium head green cabbage (will produce about a quart)
- 1 tablespoon non-iodized salt (or to taste)
- Quart sized canning jar

Quarter the cabbage, remove the core, and slice the cabbage into thin strips (about 1/4" wide). Everything will ferment at the same pace if the pieces are cut uniformly.

Put 1/2 the cut cabbage in a large bowl, and sprinkle 1/2 of the salt over the top. Then put the rest of the cabbage on top & sprinkle the remaining salt. Toss well to incorporate (clean hands work best).

Let sit for 1 to 2 hours, tossing it again a few times. This allows the salt to start softening the cabbage (less work for you later). Then you can start working it to help release juices. You can use any tool you'd like- wooden spoon, sauerkraut pounder, or better yet your hands! Smash/crush/squeeze it until a good amount of juices are in the bottom of the bowl. Older, drier cabbage can take longer, and could require the addition of brine if enough juices don't accumulate.

Taste the cabbage for saltiness. Once all the salt has incorporated, this is exactly how salty your finished kraut will be. If more salt is needed, sprinkle in a little more & work it in. Just remember- you can add more, but you can't "unsalt" it once it's in there.

When you have plenty of juices, start filling your jar with cabbage. Tamp down as you go, using a wooden spoon, pounder or your fist (don't get your hand stuck!). This will eliminate air pockets. Fill the jar, leaving about 2 inches headspace from cabbage level. There should be enough liquid to cover the cabbage. If not, you can add a little brine (1 tbsp. salt to 1 quart water, dissolved- save remainder for future use) to cover, leaving 1 inch headspace. Keep in mind that this will increase the saltiness. Don't overfill your jar.

While fermenting, be sure that air can't get to your cabbage. Gases need to escape, but air can introduce mold if your cabbage isn't submerged. You can 1) weight it down to keep below liquid, 2) use an airlock, 3) use a canning lid & ring (but DON'T FORGET to burp the jar to release gases daily!).

Allow to ferment at room temp (68 to 78 is ideal) for about 7 days. Taste after 4-5 days, particularly if it's warm weather. It's ready when the crunch is just right for you. The longer it goes, the softer it will be. The warmer it is, the faster it will ferment.

When finished, seal with a tight lid & store in the fridge forever (well, not forever, but up to a year is fine, as long as no mold is present).

