

# Making Sauerkraut



**Prep Time:**  
20-30 min

**Servings:** 1Qt

**Ready In:**  
3 days to 3 months  
(and beyond)

## Ingredients:

- **2lbs of vegetables per quart:** Any varieties of cabbage alone or in combination, or at least half cabbage and the remainder any combination of radishes, turnips, carrots, beets, kohlrabi, artichoke, onions, shallots, leeks, garlic, greens, peppers, or other vegetables.
- **Approximately 1 TBSP salt** (start with a little less, add if needed after tasting)
- **Other seasonings as desired, such as:** Caraway seeds, juniper berries, dill, chili peppers, ginger, turmeric, dried cranberries, or whatever you can conjure in your imagination.

## Directions:

### **Prepare the vegetables:**

Remove the outer leaves of the cabbage and reserve. Scrub the root vegetables but do not peel. Chop or grate all vegetables into a bowl. The purpose of this is to expose surface area in order to pull water out of the vegetables, so that they can be submerged under their own juices. The finer the veggies are shredded, the easier it is to get juices out, but fineness or coarseness can vary with excellent results.

### **Salt and season:**

Salt the vegetables lightly and add seasonings as you chop. Sauerkraut does not require heavy salting. Taste after the next step and add more salt or seasonings, if desired. Remember, it's always easier to add salt than to remove it.

### **Squeeze:**

Squeeze the salted vegetables with your hands for a few minutes (or pound with a blunt tool). This bruises the vegetables, breaking down cell walls and enabling them to release their juices. Squeeze until you can pick up a handful and when you squeeze, juice releases (as from a wet sponge).

### **Pack:**

Pack the salted and squeezed vegetables into your jar. Press the vegetables down with force, so that air pockets are expelled and juice rises up and over the vegetables. Fill the jar not quite all the way to the top, leaving a little space for expansion. The vegetables tend to float to the top of the brine, so it's best to keep them pressed down, using one of the cabbage's outer leaves folded to fit inside the jar, a carved chunk of a root vegetable, or a glass or ceramic insert. Screw the top on the jar; fermentation produces carbon dioxide, so pressure will build up in the jar and needs to be released daily, especially the first few days when fermentation will be most vigorous.

### **Wait:**

Be sure to loosen the top to relieve pressure each day for the first few days. The rate of fermentation will be faster in a warm environment, slower in a cool one. Some people prefer their krauts lightly fermented for just a few days; others prefer a stronger, more acidic flavor that develops over weeks or months. Taste at regular intervals to discover what you prefer.