

How To Make Sauerkraut in a Kilner Jar

What You Need

Ingredients

1 medium head green or red cabbage

3 tablespoons salt (no additives)

Optional extras, carrots, beetroot, onions, butternut squash.

Equipment

Cutting board

Chef's knife

Mixing bowl (metal or crockery, not plastic)

Kilner jar or similar

Smaller jar that fits inside the larger kilner jar

Cloth for covering the jar

Instructions

1. **Clean everything:** When fermenting anything, it's best to give the good, beneficial bacteria every chance of succeeding by starting off with as clean an environment as possible. Make sure your kilner jar and small jar are washed and rinsed of all soap residue. You'll be using your hands to massage the salt into the cabbage, so give those a good wash, too.
2. **Slice the cabbage:** Discard the wilted, limp outer leaves of the cabbage. Keep 2 good quality outer leaves to use as a cover. Cut the cabbage into very thin ribbons.
3. **Combine the cabbage and salt:** Transfer one third of the cabbage to a big mixing bowl and sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the salt over top, mixing gently with the hands. Add another third and repeat the process, then the last third. Begin working the salt into the cabbage by massaging and squeezing the cabbage with your hands. At first it might not seem like enough salt, but gradually the cabbage will become watery and limp — more like coleslaw than raw cabbage. This will take 5 to 10 minutes.
4. **Pack the cabbage into the jar:** Grab handfuls of the cabbage and pack them into the kilner jar. Every so often, tamp down the cabbage in the jar with your fist or a wooden rolling pin. Pour any liquid released by the cabbage while you were massaging it into the jar. → *Optional: Place one of the larger outer leaves of the cabbage over the surface of the sliced cabbage. This will help keep the cabbage submerged in its liquid. I prefer to do this.*

5. **Weigh the cabbage down:** Once all the cabbage is packed into the kilner jar, slip the smaller jar filled with water into the mouth of the jar and press it down firmly. This will help keep the cabbage weighed down, and submerged beneath its liquid.
6. **Cover the jar:** Cover the mouth of the kilner jar with a cloth and secure it with a rubber band or twine if you wish. This allows air to flow in and out of the jar, but prevents dust or insects from getting into the jar.
7. **Press the cabbage every day:** Over the next 24 hours, press down on the cabbage every so often with the jar. As the cabbage releases its liquid, it will become more limp and compact and the liquid will rise over the top of the cabbage.
8. **Ferment the cabbage for 3 to 10 days:** As it's fermenting, keep the sauerkraut away from direct sunlight and at a cool room temperature — ideally 65°F to 75°F. Check it daily and press it down to expel the bubbles. Because this is a small batch of sauerkraut, it will ferment more quickly than larger batches. Start tasting it after 3 days — when the sauerkraut tastes good to you, remove the weight, screw on the cap, and refrigerate. You can also allow the sauerkraut to continue fermenting for 10 days or even longer. There's no hard-and-fast rule for when the sauerkraut is "done" — go by how it tastes. While it's fermenting, you may see bubbles coming through the cabbage, foam on the top, or white scum. These are all signs of a healthy, happy fermentation process. The scum can be skimmed off the top either during fermentation or before refrigerating. If you see any mould, skim it off immediately and make sure your cabbage is fully submerged; don't eat mouldy parts close to the surface, but the rest of the sauerkraut is fine.
9. **Store sauerkraut for several months:** This sauerkraut is a fermented product so it will keep for at least two months and often longer if kept refrigerated. As long as it still tastes and smells good to eat, it will be. If you like, you can transfer the sauerkraut to a smaller container for longer storage. In our house it is eaten within a couple of weeks!