

Krautsourcing: Basic Step-by-Step Sauerkraut Method

Abbreviations and terms:

SK: sauerkraut

Brine: a mix of water/liquid/cabbage juice and salt

Anaerobic: means "without air"

Equipment

- A suitable wide-mouth jar with lid(s) or a clip-lock jar ('fido' jar or 'preserving' jar)
- Chopping board
- Large mixing bowl
- Sharp knife or shredder
- Mortar or blunt ended rolling pin or kitchen mallet (optional)
- Fermentation weight or smaller jar or shot glasses (that fits inside the larger jar); or plastic snap-lock bag [to weigh down the cabbage inside the jar]

Ingredients

- Cabbage (any variety or colour)
 - Good quality salt (1-2% of the weight of your cabbage, in grams. Or, use a generous tablespoon per cabbage)
 - Flavours (ie. caraway or other seeds, ginger, chilli, beetroot, carrot...)
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Method

1. Break off and reserve 2-3 tougher outer leaves of the cabbage.
2. Cut the cabbage into half and remove the core. Cut the cored cabbage into a size and shape that will aid shredding (ie. quarters).
3. Shred the cabbage with the knife or shredder. Aim to shred the cabbage as finely as you can, as you want to break down as many cell walls of the cabbage as you can, to begin to release water from the cabbage. This water is going to form the brine the SK will ferment in. You can make it 'chunky' but you will have to work harder to form the brine at the next step.



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4. Place shredded cabbage in the bowl. Add salt (see the [Salt PDF](#) for more info) and flavours (see the [Flavours PDF](#) for more info). Use hands to massage or pestle/mallet to smash cabbage to release water and produce brine. Massage/smash until the cabbage is dripping. (see 'troubleshooting' heading below for advice if you are having trouble producing brine from your cabbage)



5. Use your hand to stuff a jar with the cabbage, a layer at a time. Pressing the cabbage layers in very firmly with your hand or a mortar/rolling pin to submerge the cabbage under the brine and eliminate air bubbles. Pack cabbage until it is about 250mm below the rim of the jar.



6. Use a saved outer-cabbage-leaf to create a "lid" for the kraut. This will stop the shredded cabbage from floating on top of the brine and risk mould developing. Tuck the lid into the sides of the bulk of the cabbage around the edge inside the jar. Make sure there are no small bits of cabbage left stuck to the sides of the jar where you have left space between the lid and the rim of the jar.



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7. Weigh down the cabbage with the fermentation weight/shot glass/smaller jar/plastic snap-lock bag full of water. Make sure the cabbage is submerged under the brine. If you must, add a little water to top up the jar to make sure the cabbage is submerged. Put the lid on TIGHTLY (wild sauerkraut fermentation is an anaerobic process).



8. Leave to ferment for 7 to 14 to 28 (or longer!) days at room temperature. Optimal temperature for SK fermentation is between 21-24 degrees C. Between 15-20 degrees C, it will take 5-6 weeks for SK to mature nicely. Above 27 degrees, SK may become soft and spoil. Feel free to taste-test after a week, but be wary that the more you open your jar, the more you may open up your SK to mould and other bacteria.



During Fermentation

In the first 1-7 days, you will probably see some changes in your SK. You may see:

- Bubbles/light foam may form at the top of the brine
- The brine rising
- Colour change (cabbage may lighten)

This is all totally normal.

Watch out that your brine doesn't overflow! This shouldn't happen if you have left enough "head room" in your jar. If brine starts to overflow, just put the jar in a bowl so it doesn't get all over your bench.

Storage

Ideal storage temperature is 4 degrees C. The Fermentation process is almost ceased at such a low temperature. The easiest thing to do is put your SK in the fridge! As you eat it, make sure you keep what's left under the brine level. It's also a good idea to transfer it into smaller and smaller jars as you eat it. This reduces air exposure and will continue to preserve the SK for longer. Like any food, if it's left long enough, even SK will spoil. If you don't eat it all first, SK can keep, if kept well, it can keep for 6 months or so!

PHOTO CREDITS

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