Sauerkraut

presented by UCCE Master Food Preservers of Sacramento County

as found in So Easy to Preserve, p 143-144
To Start:

- For the best sauerkraut, use firm heads of fresh cabbage.
- Shred cabbage and start kraut between 24 and 48 hours after harvest.
Ingredients

- 3 pounds of cabbage
- 1-2 tablespoons of canning salt
Gather your materials
Cutting board, large knife, quart jar (or other appropriate container*), sauerkraut tamper, fermentation weights or pipes
Appropriate containers ...

- Glass jars
- Modern stoneware crocks made for fermenting
- Food-grade plastic (confirm with manufacturer)
- Container lined with several food-grade plastic bags
- DO NOT USE: aluminum, copper, brass, galvanized or iron containers
Prep the cabbage
Discard the outer leaves and rinse each cabbage head. Reserve a ‘pretty’ outer leaf for use covering the cabbage in the jar later.
Shred

Halve, quarter, core, and shred the cabbage to about the thickness of a quarter.
Mix
Weigh out 3 pounds of shredded cabbage and place in a suitable bowl. Add salt and mix thoroughly using clean hands.
What’s happening

Mixing and squeezing the cabbage with salt draws the liquid out and creates a brine. This brine will be key to the safe fermentation of your cabbage into sauerkraut.
Pack

Add shredded, and mixed cabbage to your container, tamping it in tightly with a tamper or with your hand. More brine will probably be created as you pack the cabbage in. Continue packing until cabbage is within 2 inches of the container’s rim.
Keep packing...
Cover

• Brine should cover cabbage by 1-2”.
• Cover cabbage with reserved cabbage leaf. Tuck around jar to keep cabbage contained.
• If brine is not sufficient to cover the shredded cabbage, supplement with boiled and cooled brine (1 ½ T canning salt/Qt of water).
Weights

- Needed to keep cabbage below the brine
- Can use plates, jars, weights made for fermenting, fermentation lids, or a clean plastic bag of brine.
Store

- Can cover with a clean kitchen/bath towel
- Pickle/fermentation pipes or lids
- 70-75F ideally
- Low light
And wait ...

- Needed to keep cabbage below the brine
- Can use plates, jars, weights made for fermenting, fermentation lids, or a clean plastic bag of brine.
It’s ready ...

- 3-4 weeks
- Longer ferment = more “zing”
- Fully fermented can be stored for months in fridge
- Can also be canned
More info:

- So Easy to Preserve
- NCHFP.UGA.edu
- FreshPreserving.com