

Cornell Cooperative Extension

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FERMENTING VEGETABLES IN A MASON JAR

Fermenting sauerkraut and other vegetables in quart and half-gallon Mason jars is an acceptable practice, but may result in more spoilage losses. This is because it can be difficult to keep the cabbage submerged under the brine.

Fermenting in jars can be useful if you plan to do a few jars and refrigerate them rather than processing. If you plan to ferment several heads of cabbage, it is best to use a larger container and process them in a water-bath canner so they can be stored safely at room temperature.

Sauerkraut in a Jar Makes 1 quart

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds cabbage (8 to 10 cups shredded or chopped)
- 1 tablespoon plus $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon canning or pickling salt
- 1 wide mouth quart jar

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash jar, lid, bowls and utensils in hot water and soap or wash in the dishwasher.
2. Wash, shred or slice cabbage to the thickness of 1 to 2 quarters.
3. Combine cabbage and salt in a large bowl; mix thoroughly. Allow salted cabbage to stand for 5 minutes to begin to draw juice out of the cabbage.
4. Using your clean hands press down and squeeze the cabbage to draw juices. Repeat until cabbage starts to become soft and you notice juice in the bottom of the bowl.
5. Pack cabbage and juice into jar. Reach in with your hand or a wooden spoon and press the cabbage down into the bottom to release any air pockets. Work with a few handfuls at a time until the cabbage and juice nearly reach the top of the jar.
6. If juice does not cover the cabbage completely, add boiled and cooled brine ($1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of salt/quart water).
7. Push the cabbage under the brine using a smaller jar that fits inside the opening or a food-grade plastic bag filled with brine. Either cover with a lid (just tightly enough to keep out insects and mold, but not too tight that gas produced during fermentation cannot escape) or cover with a heavy cloth.
8. Place jar on a tray to catch overflowing juice that may leak out during fermentation. (Note: DO NOT pour the juice that bubbles out back into the jar.)
9. Allow the cabbage to ferment for about 3 weeks or until you no longer see bubbling. If you use a plastic bag with brine as a weight, do not disturb the

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bag. If you use jars as weight, you will need to check the kraut two to three times a week and remove scum if it forms.

10. Kraut will keep several months in the refrigerator or may be processed in a water-bath canner.