

Homemade Sauerkraut

Naturally fermented foods are excellent for your health. Not only in health food stores, you can get naturally fermented sauerkraut right from your own pantry. Making sauerkraut is easy. The cabbage isn't cooked, and the jar isn't sealed. The salt keeps bad bacteria at bay until the lactic acid in the cabbage "kicks in" to ferment the food safely. The jar hibernates in your pantry at least six weeks, after which, you can let it sit for months or eat it. If it turns golden yellow or brownish, that is good. If it turns a reddish or orange color, that is bad; throw it out. None of the batches I've made have gone bad.

Here's how you do it.

Tools You'll Need:

- ❖ quart jar with lid (for example, washed jar and lid of store-bought sauerkraut after eaten)
- ❖ small mixing bowl
- ❖ potato masher or mallet for tenderizing meat
- ❖ shredder (optional)
- ❖ knife (optional)

Ingredients You'll Need:

- ❖ half of a head of cabbage (green or red)
- ❖ 2 T sea salt (absolutely necessary)
- ❖ 1 T garlic powder (optional)
- ❖ 1 tsp curry (optional)
- ❖ 1 tsp ginger (optional)

What to Do:

1. Wash cabbage.
2. Repeat this process until all cabbage, salt, and seasonings are in bowl:
 - Tear, cut, shred—any or all of these—part of the cabbage into the bowl.
 - Sprinkle some of the sea salt and seasonings onto the cabbage in the bowl.
 - Crush and mash the cabbage until some juice comes out.
3. Spoon the crushed cabbage into the jar, mash some more until juice and cabbage fill jar to a half inch from the top. This half inch is needed for proper fermentation. I've had a little more room at the top once or twice and it's been okay, but you can't fill the jar any more than that. You can usually keep mashing until you get the cabbage and juice where it needs to be.
4. Screw the lid on tight, and don't worry that it isn't sealed or boiled or whatever. Really.
5. Set the jar in a cool, dry place out of the sun. Your kitchen cabinet or pantry is ideal.
6. Six weeks—or more—later, spoon it cold onto your salad, or eat warm as a side dish at supper.
7. In the meantime, start another jar. ☺