

# Vegetable Fermentation Basics

Sauerkraut, kimchi, and old fashioned brine-cured pickles are all examples of vegetable fermentation. Much like yogurt-making uses friendly, pro-biotic bacteria to transform milk into yogurt, vegetable fermentation uses friendly, pro-biotic bacteria to pickle and preserve vegetables.

## What do I need to ferment vegetables?

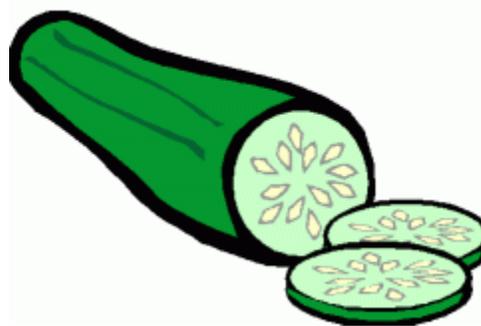
Water

Salt (preferably non-iodized salt such as pickling salt or sea salt)

Container to ferment in and a weight

Produce of your choice (cabbage, peppers, cucumbers, carrots, green beans or other favorite)

Herbs and spices, leaves for extra tannins (oak, grape, black tea)



## How to do it:

Mix up brine according to chart below. Suggested brine percentages: for carrots, broccoli & cauliflower use 2-3%, for peppers & cucumbers use about 5%, for pepper mash/sriracha use 10%. For self brining vegetables, massage salt into vegetables.

Place vegetables and brine in container with leaves (for tannins) and spices or herbs. Put small items such as herbs or peppercorns in the bottom of the jar to discourage them from floating to the top.

Weigh the vegetables down so that **all the veggies, spices, etc are below the surface of the brine.** Cover with lid or cloth.

Check frequently and skim off any scum. If the brine is getting low, add more brine. **Make sure the vegetables are submerged under the brine at all times!** Beware that active cultures will release gas, causing a build up of pressure in your container. Make sure the gas has a way to escape, or you may have a dangerous explosion! Start tasting cucumbers & peppers at 1-2 weeks, kraut may take 4 weeks. Fermentation time will depend on how warm the room is. They should taste and smell sour and tasty. If your veggies look moldy or smell or taste rotten or bad, throw them out!

## Brine chart

| Amt Water        | 1.80%  | 3.60%  | 5.40%   | 7.2%    | 9.00%   |
|------------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 quart          | 1 Tbsp | 2 Tbsp | 3 Tbsp  | 4 Tbsp  | 5 Tbsp  |
| 2 qt. (half gal) | 2 Tbsp | 4 Tbsp | 6 Tbsp  | 8 Tbsp  | 10 Tbsp |
| 1 gallon         | 4 Tbsp | 8 Tbsp | 12 Tbsp | 16 Tbsp | 20 Tbsp |

16 TBSP=1 cup  
12 TBSP=3/4 cup  
8 TBSP=1/2 cup  
4 TBSP=1/4 cup

For self brining vegetables use about 2 teaspoons of salt for each pound of vegetables. (Or 3 Tablespoons for 5 pounds of vegetables.)