

How to Make Cabbage Kimchi

Makes 1 quart

What You Need

Ingredients

- 1 medium head (2 pounds) Napa cabbage
- 1/4 cup sea salt or kosher salt (see Recipe Notes)
- Water (see Recipe Notes)
- 1 tablespoon grated garlic (5 to 6 cloves)
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons seafood flavor or water (optional, see Recipe Notes)
- 1 to 5 tablespoons Korean red pepper flakes ([gochugaru](#))
- 8 ounces Korean radish or daikon, peeled and cut into matchsticks
- 4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces

Equipment

- Cutting board and knife
- Large bowl
- Gloves (optional but highly recommended)
- Plate and something to weigh the kimchi down, like a jar or can of beans
- Colander
- Small bowl
- Clean 1-quart jar with canning lid or plastic lid
- Bowl or plate to place under jar during fermentation

Instructions

- Slice the cabbage:** Cut the cabbage lengthwise into quarters and remove the cores. Cut each quarter crosswise into 2-inch-wide strips.
- Salt the cabbage:** Place the cabbage and salt in a large bowl. Using your hands (gloves optional), massage the salt into the cabbage until it starts to soften a bit, then add water to cover the cabbage. Put a plate on top and weigh it down with something heavy, like a jar or can of beans. Let stand for 1 to 2 hours.
- Rinse and drain the cabbage:** Rinse the cabbage under cold water 3 times and drain in a colander for 15 to 20 minutes. Rinse and dry the bowl you used for salting, and set it aside to use in step 5.
- Make the paste:** Meanwhile, combine the garlic, ginger, sugar, and seafood flavor (or 3 tablespoons water) in a small bowl and mix to form a smooth paste. Mix in the gochugaru, using 1 tablespoon for mild and up to 5 tablespoons for spicy (I like about 3 1/2 tablespoons).
- Combine the vegetables and paste:** Gently squeeze any remaining water from the cabbage and return it to the bowl along with the radish, scallions, and seasoning paste.
- Mix thoroughly:** Using your hands, gently work the paste into the vegetables until they are thoroughly coated. The gloves are optional here but highly recommended to protect your hands from stings, stains, and smells!
- Pack the kimchi into the jar:** Pack the kimchi into the jar, pressing down on it until the brine rises to cover the vegetables. Leave at least 1 inch of headspace. Seal the jar with the lid.
- Let it ferment:** Let the jar stand at room temperature for 1 to 5 days. You may see bubbles inside the jar and brine may seep out of the lid; place a bowl or plate under the jar to help catch any overflow.
- Check it daily and refrigerate when ready:** Check the kimchi once a day, pressing down on the vegetables with a clean finger or spoon to keep them submerged under the brine. (This also releases gases produced during fermentation.) Taste a little at this point, too! When the kimchi tastes ripe enough for your liking, transfer the jar to the refrigerator. You may eat it right away, but it's best after another week or two.

Recipe Notes

- **Salt:** Use salt that is free of iodine and anti-caking agents, which can inhibit fermentation.
- **Water:** Chlorinated water can inhibit fermentation, so use spring, distilled, or filtered water if you can.
- **Seafood flavor and vegetarian alternatives:** Seafood gives kimchi an umami flavor. Different regions and families may use fish sauce, salted shrimp paste, oysters, and other seafood. Use about 2 tablespoons of fish sauce, salted shrimp paste, or a combination of the two. For vegetarian kimchi, I like using 3/4 teaspoon **kelp powder** mixed with 3 tablespoons water, or simply 3 tablespoons of water.

Kimchee Recipe

1 head Napa cabbage, cut into 1 ½" strips

½ Daikon radish, sliced into matchstick pieces*

3 TBSP salt

5-6 green onions

1-3 minced garlic cloves

½ - 1 tsp crushed red hot peppers or ground red pepper

1 tsp chopped ginger root

1. Put cabbage in bowl, add salt & cover with water. Place heavy plate on top to keep cabbage submerged. Let soak 5-10 hours at room temperature.
2. Drain & rinse cabbage. Add green onions & daikon radish.
3. In small bowl, mix garlic, ginger & red pepper. Add to cabbage mixture and stir to coat well.
4. Pack into 1 quart canning jar, pressing down so liquid covers the vegetables. Seal with lid.
5. Let the jar stand at room temperature for 1-5 days. Taste and when it is to your liking, transfer jar to refrigerator. This keeps several weeks in the refrigerator

*You can also add other vegetables, such as celery cabbage or regular onions