

# Natural Fermented Vegetables by Tanja Westfall Greiter

In this episode, Tanja talked about a relatively weak brine of 1.5%, which works well with radishes, squash and several other vegetables. An all-purpose salt brine for everything from asparagus to carrots is 3% and a good way to start for beginners. The metric system is best for ensuring an exact solution, because salt can differ in weight:

1 liter of water + 30 grams of salt give you a 3% solution

1 liter of water + 20 grams of salt give you a 2% solution

and so on.

Most American kitchens do not have a kitchen scale for weighing ingredients, so here is Tanja's suggestion for simplifying things: 1 quart of water + 5 teaspoons of salt will be approximately a 3% solution

## METHOD:

1. Sterilize a jar and prepare your salt brine by heating the water enough for the salt to dissolve.
2. While the brine is cooling to room temperature, prepare your vegetables. (See notes below.)
3. Pack the jar as tight as you can with the vegetables. Let them rest a few minutes and try to pack in more.
4. Fill the jar with the salt brine and put the cover on it loosely, to allow for air to escape. If the vegetables you are using floats to the top, you might need to weight it down. A smaller jar or glass that fits into the mouth of your fermenting jar works well. The goal is to be sure all of the vegetables are sealed in by the brine by being below the surface of the liquid – completely submerged.
5. Leave your ferment at room temperature for 3-5 days, depending on how sour you want it. Taste it daily, using a sterile fork. In the first days, the brine may bubble up and spill over, so set the jar on a plate or bowl.
6. When you are happy with the degree of sourness, cap your jar and store it in the fridge. As long as they are not contaminated, a ferment can keep for a long time (up to three years, in my experience), but the general recommendation is to use enjoy them within 2 months.

## NOTES:

### Preparing various vegetables for fermenting:

Radish, squash, carrots: shred or julienne

Pickling cucumbers: whole or halved, if larger

Asparagus: cut in lengths to fit the jar when packed upright

Carrots: cut into sticks to pack upright in the jar, ferment with sprigs of fresh dill and sliced fresh garlic.

Jalapeno peppers: slice

Garlic, fresh herbs and fresh chili can be added to ferments. Fresh Thai chilis and garlic are my favorites for just about any ferment. Sprigs of fresh dill and sliced fresh garlic with carrots and pickles are a must!