

Kimchi Recipe (Napa Cabbage kimchi)

Kimchi / Kimchee (김치) is a traditional Korean side dish made from fermented cabbage, radish, or cucumber. It is often categorized by the main vegetable ingredient used to make it.

Kimchi is a staple food in Korean cuisine. Most Koreans have it with almost every Korean meal at least once a day. The most popular kimchi includes baechu kimchi (made with napa cabbage, 배추김치), [kkakdugi](#) (made with radish, 깍두기), and [oi kimchi](#) (made with cucumber, 오이김치).

Kimchi Seasoning / Kimchi Paste

- 2 Tbsp glutinous rice flour (sweet rice flour)
- 1.5 cups (360 ml) water
- 1.5 cups (141g / 4.97 ounces) [gochugaru](#) (Korean chili flakes)
- 540g / 19 ounces Korean radish or daikon radish, julienned
- 1 Tbsp fine sea salt
- 3.5 Tbsp [Korean fish sauce](#)
- 2 Tbsp salted fermented shrimp ([saeujeot](#)), minced
- 90g / 3.2 ounces Korean chives, cut in 5 cm / 2 inch length
- 140g / 4.9 ounces carrots, julienned
- 1/4 cup (42g / 1.48 ounces) minced garlic
- 1/2 Tbsp minced ginger
- 2 Tbsp raw sugar
- 75g / 2.6 ounces onion, blended (with a stick blender or vegetable chopper) or finely grated
- **1 Tbsp = 15 ml, 1 cup = 250 ml**

How to make Kimchi

1. Cut the napa cabbage into quarters and rinse it in running water. Make sure the stem is intact.

2. Dissolve the coarse salt in the water (16 cups) in a large bowl. Dip the napa cabbage in the saltwater one at a time and transfer it onto a tray for further salting. Pinch some cooking salt (1/2 cup total for all pickled cabbages) and rub over the thick white part of the cabbage. Open each leaf gently and sprinkle the salt over the thick white part. Repeat this for the rest of the cabbage. Reserve the saltwater from when you soaked the cabbage for later use.
3. Put the salted cabbage in a large food grade plastic bag or large bucket (wedge side of the cabbage to be facing up) and pour in the reserved saltwater from step 2. Close the plastic bag. If using a bucket, get something heavy on top of the cabbage to press down (e.g heavy pot with water). Set the cabbage aside for 6 hours to pickle. Rotate the cabbage upside down every 2 hours. Using a large food grade plastic bag will make the turning process much easier than using a large bucket.
4. Once the soaking process is finished, rinse the cabbages in running water, especially the thick white part of the cabbage, to get rid of the salt. Place them in a colander and allow to drain for 1 hour.
5. While waiting, prepare the glutinous rice paste. Mix glutinous rice flour with the water (1.5 cups) in a saucepan and boil it over medium heat for 5-8 minutes, until it thickens. Once ready, transfer the rice paste to the medium-size bowl and let it cool. Add Korean chili flakes once it has cooled. Then, combine them well.
6. Prepare a large mixing bowl and add radish, fine sea salt, Korean fish sauce, and salted fermented shrimp. Leave it for 10 minutes for the radish to salt down. Add Korean chives, carrots, minced garlic, minced ginger, sugar, blended onion, and the Korean chili flakes mixture from step 5. Mix them well. Now the kimchi seasoning / kimchi paste is made, ready for use.
7. Place a quarter of a cabbage on a tray. Spread the seasonings over each leaf. (You only need to season one side of the leaf.) 1 to 2 small fistfuls of seasoning is enough per quarter of cabbage. Repeat this step for the rest of the cabbage. Don't pull the cabbage leaves off the stem, leave them attached so it holds together better.
8. Transfer the kimchi into a kimchi container or an airtight container (and put the lid on). Leave it out at room temperature for 24 hours, then move it to the refrigerator. While you can start eating it once it's chilled, you may want to wait 3-4 more days for it to develop more flavor.

9. Once the kimchi is ready to eat, chop a small portion and store it in a smaller glass container. This makes it more convenient to serve with your meal. Keep the other batches intact in the large kimchi container. This way, you only cut it up as needed, which helps keep the remaining kimchi fresh longer.

How to store Kimchi

- It is important to know how to store kimchi properly in order to keep it “fresh” longer. The best ways to store kimchi is to keep it in an airtight container and in the refrigerator.
- Even better, if you have a specialty fridge like a “kimchi refrigerator” at home, as it will help store kimchi at the perfect temperature. A constant cold temperature will help prevent spoilage and maintain optimal kimchi quality.
- As for the airtight container, if you live near a place with a high Korean population, you may be able to buy a “[kimchi container](#)” as well. I recommend a stainless steel container in this regard or, at the very least, a BPA-free plastic container.
- These kimchi containers go beyond regular airtight containers. Kimchi in these containers really last much longer. One of my kimchi batches still tasted as new even after 4 weeks of fermentation in the fridge.
- To ferment faster, I eventually transferred it into a different container. This allowed us to have more of that tangy kimchi flavor. So storage containers do make a difference in the quality and taste of kimchi.
- But, be sure to only fill your kimchi container up to 70 or 80% of the way full. This is to prevent the kimchi liquid from overflowing and allow the gas generated by fermentation to circulate around the container instead of out.
- The more time kimchi is exposed to oxygen, the quicker it will ferment. This can result in mold developing and raise the risk of a foul odor.
- For kimchi storage, an ideal temperature is 3-5 degrees Celsius. So try to minimize opening the fridge door as that leads to fluctuations in the fridge’s internal temperature.
- Kimchi can typically last in the fridge for a couple of months, but depending on the storage conditions you could keep it for up to a year or so too.