



The Problem	Why it happened	What to do about it
White foam or scum on top	Foam forming on top is common. This happens when the fermented vegetable is exposed to air.	Skim the foam off the top of the surface. The veggies under the brine is still good and safe to eat.
White layer floating on the top that can look creamy. Sometimes mistaken for mold.	This is called kahm yeast and it forms sometimes when fermenting vegetables. Exposure to air, amount of salt, temperature and hygiene when preparing the ferment may cause this.	Kahm yeast is safe and will not harm you. Scrape it off the surface as it forms.
Surface mold develops	Mold can be common on the surface if it's been fermenting for a few weeks. The veggies under the brine are still good.	Skim the mold off the surface and throw away any veggies that have mold on them. You can avoid this by using a fermentation crock or jar with an airlock or pushing the cabbage back under the brine daily so that mold doesn't have a chance to grow.
Too salty	Used too much salt	You can add some water to try and dilute the salt. You can rinse it before eating or use it instead of salt to flavor dressings and sauces. I sprinkle over-salted sauerkraut in dishes to add flavor instead salt and it tastes great.
Strong smell	Fermenting vegetables creates strong smells which is normal. If it's putrid in smell, it may have been caused by salting unevenly or not using enough salt.	You can reduce the smell of fermenting vegetables if its bothering you by placing them in a cool basement or garage if you have that option. Another option is to seal the lids tight and burp them outside daily. If the smell is putrid and you think it's truly bad, throw it away and try again.
Soft and mushy	Warm temperatures, low salt, uneven salt distribution in the jar or length of fermentation can cause this.	It's perfectly safe to eat.
Slimy	This can happen if temperatures are too high or not enough salt was used.	Let is ferment longer to see if it goes away. If it doesn't, throw it out.
Sauerkraut turns pink	If you used purple cabbage, this is normal. If you used green cabbage and it turns pink then it could be caused by too much yeast. This could be caused by too much salt in the brine or uneven distribution of salt.	I have read that it is safe to eat and also that it isn't. I would just throw it out.
Brown sauerkraut	If the kraut turns dark brown it could be caused by lack of salt, uneven salt distribution, using iodized salt or high temperatures.	It's only at the top, you can scrape it off and the cabbage underneath is usually good. Otherwise throw it out.