



Most frequently asked questions

How long will my wine last in the bottles?

Normally, higher-end wine kits like Vintner's & Grand Cru have a shelf life of around 2-3 years. 16 Litre kits like Cru Select and Selection are usually good for 5-6 years.

How do I prepare my corks?

Corks should be soaked in a mild sulphite solution no longer than 30 seconds. A quick rinse and you're ready to go!

How do I remove the labels from my wine bottles?

Soak bottles in hot water overnight with pink stuff (1 tbsp/gal). Labels should come off fairly easily. And Hey! Now you're bottles are all sterilized inside and out. Rinse well and you're in business.

What's the difference between the pink powder and sodium metabisulphite (white stinky stuff!)?

Chlorine detergent (pink powder) is used extensively in the food industry. It's an excellent sterilizer for all your brewing equipment (pails, carboys, spoons, etc.). The white stinky stuff is excellent for sterilizing your corks and filter pads. *Rinse well when using either one!*

Do I filter or don't I? That's the question.

Filtering your wine is a matter of choice. If you choose not to filter your wine, there is always that little chance of sediment dust in your wine bottles. Filtering your wine eliminates any chance of a cloudy bottle. It also removes any impurities and polishes your wine. Always make sure wine is 95% clear before filtering, otherwise, stripping of the wine and filter leakage will occur, thus resulting in cloudy wine bottles.



Why is my wine carbonated?

Some home winemakers still refuse to use the add packs that come with their wine kits. The so-called “chemicals” that we use in winemaking are all extremely important, and actually amount to about 10 % of the amounts used in commercial wines. These additives neutralize the yeast, therefore eliminating any chance of in-bottle fermentation. Make sure wine is stirred at least 3 times a day for 3 days to remove CO₂.

At what temperature should I ferment my wine or beer and can I use a battery warmer to age my wine?

Your fermentation temperature should always remain between 65°F - 75°F. Heating devices warmer than 30 watts should never be used in beer & wine making. They tend to generate too much heat and can bruise your wine. Your wine needs certain types of ingredients to age properly, i.e., tannins and acids. Too much heat destroys these important ingredients therefore loss of bouquet and flavour will occur. Battery warmers are for batteries. *Brew belts are available at The Brew-It Store and are specially designed for beer & wine making.*

Why is my beer flat?

Beer becomes flat for different reasons.

1. Not enough sugar at bottling time (1 tsp corn sugar per 341 ml bottle / 2 tsp per quart);
2. Dirty bottles or equipment (don't be afraid to sterilize);
3. Not long enough at room temperature. Leave bottles at room temperature for at least 14 days, then move to a cold room for a further 3-4 weeks. Beer peaks at 3 months and stays constant for a further 6 months;
4. Leaky bottle caps. Make sure to use a good quality capper. Gold coloured caps seem to be the choice of most brewers.

How long do I leave my wine bottles standing up after bottling?

10 days is usually long enough. This gives the cork enough time to seal the bottle.



How much space do I leave between the cork and the wine?

When bottling your wine, try to leave a 1 inch space. This is very important. Wine expands and contracts when temperature changes. If there is no space, the corks could “Pop”!

When do I put my shrink caps on my bottles?

There is no set time for shrink caps. They can go on after you cork your bottles (same day).

At what temperature should I serve my wines?

Wine should never be served ice cold. Your taste buds freeze up and you don't taste a thing. White wines should be served chilled (1/2 hour in fridge). Red wines are best at room temperature or slightly chilled (15 minutes in fridge).

Why does my beer or wine taste like yeast?

Fermentation temperature was too hot or beer and wine was left in primary fermenter too long after fermentation was complete.

Why do I have to lay my wine bottles on their sides?

Bottles are kept horizontal to keep the wine in contact with the corks. If not, corks will dry out and shrink, thus resulting in wine spoilage.