

How to Make Wine At Home

by

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HOW TO MAKE WINE

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CONTENTS

1. Forward.....	1
2. A brief History of Wine.....	2
3. A Special note about Grocery Store Fruit.....	3
4. Patience is a virtue.....	4
5. BEFORE we get started.....	5
6. Ok – Let’s gather what we need.....	6
7. Cleanliness is Next to Godliness.....	6
8. Fermentation Vessels.....	8
9. Let’s Get Started.....	10
10. The First Stage.....	11
11. Racking.....	12
12. The Second Stage.....	13
13. Clearing and Waiting.....	14
14. Fining if Needed or “Let’s Make One Thing Clear”.....	15
15. Stabilizing.....	15
16. Bottling.....	16

FORWARD

When I was in high school, me and a friend of mine heard this rumor that we could take some grape juice,

add some sugar,

throw in some yeast,

put a balloon over the bottle and then wait a month and we would have – ALCOHOL!

And that is what we were after at that time.

And it worked! We sat down on a Friday afternoon and passed that jug back and forth and within an hour, we were both acting very stupid. Ahhh... those were the days.

Unfortunately, I wouldn't drink that stuff now. Almost 30 years later, I have come to enjoy GOOD wine. Wine that costs \$35 to \$60 a bottle.

You could call me somewhat of a wine connoisseur.

About 15 years ago, it came to my attention that it was possible to get the same kind of flavor and consistency by making wine at home. From that moment on, I began experimenting.

This book will show anyone how to get a very good start on making quality wine from home. No need to keep paying huge prices, AND, you can make all you want...sort of.

The U.S. Government has put a limit on us – 200 Gallons/year. That's the law. But – that's 1000 bottles of wine – about 3 bottles a day, plenty for you and me.

How to Make Wine at Home

There is not much to making wine. Humans have been making wine for thousands of years. People make wine and DRINK it in the Bible.

It's not rocket science.

The earliest mention of winemaking is in some Mesopotamian texts – hieroglyphics – and they detail how to ferment the juice of grapes. Apparently, we were making it long before written text.

It turns out that when grapes grow, there is actually yeast ON the outside of the grapes. If all you do is crush the grapes and keep the juice around 75 degrees, the juice will ferment all by itself.

Of course, the types of yeast found on the outside of grapes are many and not all of them produce a fine tasting wine. Over the years, winemakers have developed many different strains and varieties of yeasts. These yeasts are specifically designed to extract exactly what we want out of the grape juice or fruit juice.

You could use Baker's yeast and it would work. Feel free to do so if you do not have access to a local wine or brew shop. Or, you can go to an online store and order some EC-1118 winemakers yeast.

A special note about Sugar and Fruit - - -

Grapes that are harvested at exactly the correct time are brimming with natural sugar. They are tested electronically while still on the vine to determine the exact peak time of day when the sugar content is the highest. These types of grapes never need sugar added – they already have enough.

[Click here for a complete guide on growing your own grapes.](#)

Grapes that you get at the grocery store are harvested unripe so that they will not spoil during the delivery to your supermarket. It is difficult, at best, to make a good wine from these store bought grapes. They were not ripe when they were picked, and the sugar content was probably very low. If you use grapes from the store, you will need to check the sugar content with a hydrometer (see equipment chapter) and you will probably need to add quite a bit of sugar.

The best thing to do is always use a hydrometer and check the sugar content yourself.

If you are going to buy Fruit Juices at the store, use natural whole juices with **NO PRESERVATIVES**. Preservatives will **KILL YEAST** – that's what they are there for.

A word to the wise – read the label.

Chapter 3 – Patience

When I first set out to make my own wine, I discovered one thing very quickly: Patience is a virtue.

Making GOOD wine takes some time – and by time I mean months – not days or weeks. Also – patience is required during the fermenting process, the racking process, the bottling process, and the ageing process.

Patience, Patience, Patience. Believe me – it will pay off. Go SLOW.

Can you make wine fast and drink it? ABSOLUTELY!

However, no one else but you will drink it. It will not taste good to anyone else but you (and YOU will usually think it tastes bad, too). Sorry.

Can you make wine fast and bolster the alcohol content so that it is 18% or more?

ABSOLUTLEY!

But again, YOU will be the only drinker of this wine.

I have included a section in this book on making fast wine, and also making fast lightning wine. Be my guest. Just remember that no one except you will see any drinkable value in what you have produced except you. It just won't taste good.

If you ever feel like you have to hurry, you are doing something wrong. You will read over and over that it's BAD to expose your wine to AIR. Yes, that's true.

But we are talking hours and hours – that's bad, not just the few minutes it takes to rack the wine from the primary fermentor to the secondary.

So, don't worry about letting your wine come into contact with the air for a few minutes, it's not going to hurt it.

When I was first starting out, I had read so many times about how it's SO IMPORTANT to keep air away from your wine that I would almost panic when it was time to move the wine from one vessel to another. I ended up sloshing the stuff all over the place.

It's best just to go slow.

BEFORE WE GET STARTED...

Planning and preparation. There is a lot that can be said about those two words. Especially when it comes to making wine.

You should PLAN what you are going to make. You should PREPARE everything in advance. This way, you will not get caught in the middle of doing something and not have what you need.

You should also PLAN where your work area will be. Sure, you could do this in your kitchen, but it's a lot nicer to have a spot staked out that is your "WINEMAKING" area.

When I first started out I used a corner of my basement. I set up 2 work tables and a set of shelves.

That's really all it takes.

I have since progressed and now have a little nicer setup. I have a nice work desk area and two storage cabinets large enough to hold my primarys and secondarys.

Nobody bothers my stuff and I know where to find what I need at a glance. I recommend the same thing for you. Make it EASY.

GATHER WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Before you ever crush the first grape, process the first peach, or open the first can of frozen concentrate, get everything you are going to need. This includes corks, bottles and a corker. It also includes siphon tubing, chemicals, and primary and secondary fermentation vessels.

Read and then re-read the recipe to make sure you have everything before you get started. There's nothing quite like having your juice in the primary and realizing that you don't have any Campden tablets.

Oh, and it's Sunday afternoon and the wine shop isn't open. Great.

Plan ahead. Check your list. Make sure everything is together **BEFORE** you get started.

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness

Did you ever wonder how those scientists get bacteria and other little bugs to grow?

Simple, they put them in a nice warm sugar/water mixture. Just about all kinds of microscopic bugs love that kind of environment. So – DON'T give it to them.

We want one kind of microbe to grow – not hundreds. We want our yeast to grow and that's all. We are not trying to have a microbe party and invite everyone.

Remember to clean and sanitize everything you will be working with...and ON. This means all surfaces in your work area should be routinely disinfected.

Dirty equipment results in very crappy wine with nice little unpleasant tastes. You can clean your spoon. But if you put it down on your workbench and then pick it back up and put it in your wine.... Well, you're "spreading germs" as momma used to say.

If all of your work surfaces are sterilized, you will be AOK.

The best thing to use is something called B-Bright Sanitizer. It is a sulfate powder that you mix with hot water. You can just wipe this mixture on everything and it kills all the microbes.

If you don't have it or cannot get it, crush up a Campden tablet and fully dissolve it in a half gallon of hot water. This is a nice sanitizing substitute.

Before you start, you want to wipe down EVERYTHING you are going to use with the sanitizing solution. This includes the inside and outside of your fermentors, as well as all of the equipment you may use. KILL all the bugs at the beginning. That way, they won't have a chance to grow later.

Sulfites are very good at this bug killing thing. Remember, all of the antibiotics in use today are made from sulfur and sulfites. Hmmm –

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