

Homemade Grape Wine Recipe

Style: Homemade Grape Wine | ABV: 10-14% | FG: 0.990-1.010 | Difficulty: Intermediate

Recipe Quick Stats

Stat	Value
Style	Homemade Grape Wine
ABV	10-14%
OG	1.090-1.110 (22-26° Brix)
FG	0.990-1.010
Batch Size	5 gallons (19 liters)
Fermentation Temp	70-85°F (21-29°C) for reds, 55-65°F (13-18°C) for whites
Total Time	6+ months
Difficulty	Intermediate

Ingredients

For 5 Gallons (19 Liters):

- 100-120 pounds (45-54 kg) fresh wine grapes OR 6 gallons of juice OR high-quality wine kit
- Wine yeast (Recommended: Lalvin RC-212 for reds, Lalvin D-47 for whites)
- Potassium metabisulfite (campden tablets)
- Pectic enzyme (for red wines)
- Yeast nutrient
- Optional adjustments as needed:
 - Sugar (to increase potential alcohol)
 - Acid blend or tartaric acid (to adjust acidity)
 - Tannin (for structure in reds)
 - Oak products (chips, cubes, or spirals)
 - Fining agents (bentonite, isinglass, etc.)

Equipment Needed

Processing & Primary Fermentation

- Crusher/destemmer
- Food-grade primary fermenter (7+ gallon capacity)
- Wine press

- Hydrometer and test jar
- pH meter or test strips
- Stirring paddle
- Breathable cover cloth

Secondary Fermentation

- 5-gallon glass carboy or demijohn (plus extras for racking)
- Airlock and bung
- Auto-siphon and food-grade tubing
- Sanitizer

Bottling

- 25-30 wine bottles (750ml)
- Corks and corker
- Bottle filler attachment
- Bottle brush and washer

Instructions

Day 1: Preparation and Processing

1. Sanitize all equipment thoroughly
2. Crush and destem grapes
3. Take initial measurements:
 - Sugar content (Brix) - Target: 22-25° Brix
 - Acidity - Target: 6-7 g/L for reds, 7-8 g/L for whites
 - pH - Target: 3.3-3.6
4. Make adjustments if necessary:
 - Add sugar to increase potential alcohol
 - Add acid to increase acidity or calcium carbonate to decrease
5. Add potassium metabisulfite ($\frac{1}{4}$ tsp per 5 gallons)
6. For red wines: add pectic enzyme according to package directions
7. Cover fermenter and wait 24 hours

Day 2: Starting Fermentation

1. Prepare wine yeast according to package directions

2. Add yeast to must and stir well
3. Cover fermenter with breathable cloth
4. For red wines: begin punch-down schedule (2-3 times daily)
5. Monitor temperature (70-85°F/21-29°C for reds, 55-65°F/13-18°C for whites)

Days 3-7: Primary Fermentation

1. Continue punch-downs for red wine
2. Monitor temperature and fermentation activity
3. Check sugar levels with hydrometer daily
4. For red wines: when hydrometer reads around 1.010-1.000 (5-7 days), prepare to press

Day 5-7: Pressing (Red Wines Only)

1. Sanitize wine press and receiving container
2. Transfer fermenting must to press
3. Press gently to extract wine
4. Transfer pressed wine to carboy
5. Attach airlock

Weeks 2-4: Secondary Fermentation

1. Keep carboy in cool location (60-68°F/15-20°C)
2. Monitor airlock activity
3. Fermentation is complete when hydrometer reads below 1.000 and remains stable for 3 days

Week 4-5: First Racking

1. Rack wine off sediment into clean carboy
2. Add ¼ tsp potassium metabisulfite per 5 gallons
3. Top up carboy with similar wine to minimize headspace
4. Reattach airlock

Months 2-6: Clarification and Aging

1. Rack again after 2-3 months
2. Consider adding fining agents if wine remains cloudy
3. Add oak products if desired:
 - Oak cubes: 3-6 cubes per 5 gallons for 1-3 months
 - Oak spirals: 1-2 per 5 gallons for 1-2 months

- Oak chips: Handful per 5 gallons for 2-4 weeks
4. Taste and adjust if necessary
 5. Continue aging in carboy, maintaining sulfite levels

Month 6+: Bottling

1. When wine is clear and stable, prepare for bottling
2. Sanitize bottles and bottling equipment
3. Add final sulfite dose (¼ tsp per 5 gallons) 24 hours before bottling
4. Fill bottles, leaving ½ inch headspace
5. Insert corks
6. Store bottles horizontally in cool, dark location
7. Allow to age in bottle:
 - Light whites: 3-6 months
 - Fuller-bodied whites: 6-12 months
 - Medium-bodied reds: 12-18 months
 - Full-bodied reds: 18+ months

Tasting Notes

A well-made homemade grape wine should exhibit:

- **Appearance:** Clear with appropriate color depth for variety
- **Aroma:** Varietal fruit characteristics without off-odors
- **Flavor:** Balanced fruit, acidity, alcohol, and (for reds) tannin
- **Mouthfeel:** Appropriate body and texture for the style
- **Finish:** Clean, lingering finish without harshness

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