



Racking for Clearer Results

One of the most important stages of wine making is *after* the wine has finished fermenting and the clearing process begins.

Racking, or decanting is the process of transferring clear or clearing wine from one container to another container leaving behind any settled sediment. This natural clearing stage cannot be hurried and quality results are dependant on this process.

When wine has finished fermenting, it is laden with many particles, including yeast, tartrate crystals and protein hazes etc. As the wine is allowed to stand it will start to clear naturally and the heavier particles will settle and form a sediment at the base of the demijohn or fermenter. If you let a wine stand for too long on its sediment off tastes can develop and these can be more noticeable in a white wine than a red wine.

The first racking of the wine off the sediment should be done approximately 2-3 weeks after fermentation is complete. At this stage the heavier particles will have settled quite firmly at the base and by using a syphon with a sediment reducing U bend, the wine can be drawn off leaving the bulk of this sediment behind.

A Syphon Outfit Makes the Job Easier

A syphon should consist of a rigid glass rod, sediment reducing U bend, rubber bung, beverage hose and in-line bottle filler.

To syphon you will need to have the first fermenter in a higher position than the demijohn to be racked in to. The rubber bung, bored with a hole (this can be the bung that houses the airlock) will hold the syphon in place and the beverage hose into the second container should be allowed to go right to the bottom of the container to avoid splashing the wine.

An in-line bottle filler can be added to the end of the syphon hose so that if you need to stop racking at any time it will automatically shut off the flow when lifted up.

You will need to Rack Several Times

For best results you can expect to rack the wine **several** times at fortnightly intervals, until **no more** sediment is forming. Ideally you should not bottle a wine until you are certain you have achieved the maximum clarity possible.

A filtering machine, like the Buon Vino Mini Jet Wine Filter, can be used to give a final commercial polish to the wine. Filtering is the last step in the wine making process before bottling. A filter should not be used to clear a wine that is still unsettled or full of particles. The process of racking over a period of time is one of the most important steps a home wine maker can take to ensure best results.

