



Barrel Use and Care

VinOak ships new barrels ready for immediate use, and recommends the following best practices for optimal barrel use and care:

Storing New Barrels

1. VinOak ships each barrel with a protective film wrap. We recommend you keep the protective film wrap on each new barrel until you are ready to rehydrate, inspect and use it with wine.
2. Be sure to store new barrels in a cool, humid environment.

When you are ready to fill the barrel with wine, it is important to first follow these barrel rehydration and inspection instructions:

Rehydrating New Barrels (Use either cold or hot water)

Using cold water

1. Fill the barrel completely with filtered, chlorine-free cold water.
2. Rehydrate by allowing the barrel to stand for up to (but no longer than) 48 hours.
3. Examine the barrel for leaks. If leakage occurs, refer to leakage instructions below.
4. Drain the barrel and allow it to dry thoroughly (estimated 1 to 2 hours).

Using hot water

1. Fill the barrel with 5 gallons of filtered, chlorine-free hot water, using the hottest water available, ideally 180°F / 82°C.
2. Insert a silicone bung snugly in the bunghole.
3. Completely wet the barrel's interior by rotating the barrel from side to side.
4. Hydrate the head by standing the barrel upright on one head for up to 4 hours.
5. Repeat the process by rotating and standing the barrel upright on the other head for up to 4 hours.
6. Examine the barrel for leaks. If leakage occurs, refer to leakage instructions below.
7. Drain the barrel and allow it to dry thoroughly (estimated 1 to 2 hours).
8. Because internal pressure may build-up inside the barrel, take care when removing the bung.

Inspecting New Barrels for Leakage

1. If leakage is present, use chalk to circle the area where leakage occurs.
2. Drain the barrel and allow it to dry thoroughly (estimated 1 to 2 hours).
3. Examine the external area marked with chalk to be sure it is completely dry.
4. Repeat rehydration using cold or hot water, then re-examine for leakage.
5. If leakage continues, drain the barrel and contact customer service immediately.
6. Once you are certain the barrel is completely dry, treat it using 10g to 20g of sulfur sticks (or equivalent in sulfur gas) to discourage microbial growth.
7. Re-insert the silicone bung snugly in the bunghole.
8. Remember that water should not sit in a barrel for more than 48 hours without the addition of sulfur and citric acid.

Re-using Barrels

We recommend the following best practices for cleaning, storing and rehydrating empty barrels previously used for winemaking.

Cleaning Barrels

1. Thoroughly rinse barrel with filtered, chlorine-free water until the drainage appears clear.
2. Drain the barrel and allow it to dry thoroughly (estimated 1 to 2 hours).
3. Once you are certain the barrel is completely dry, treat it using 10g to 20g of sulfur sticks (or equivalent in sulfur gas) to discourage microbial growth.
4. Insert a silicone bung snugly in the bunghole.

Storing Barrels

1. Be sure to store new barrels in a cool, humid environment.
2. Re-treat empty barrels with sulfur every 30 days.

Rehydrating Barrels

When you are ready to refill an empty barrel with wine, it is important to first follow the barrel rehydration and inspection instructions above.