

USING THE WINE PRESS

The procedure below is primarily for red grapes and other fruits which are fermented on the pulp and/or skins. With slight variation, white winegrapes are handled with a similar procedure.

Make sure the press and basket are clean and rinsed with hot water. Prop up the press as necessary so that a receiving container can be placed under the pour lip of the press basin. Load the basket as much as possible with fruit solids (the cap) from the top of the primary fermenter. Distribute the fruit solids uniformly to fill the basket. The wine (along with any solids in it) which drains off as the basket is being filled will be collected in the container under the pour lip. When the press basket is full, replace this container with a different container (under the pour lip) which is lined with the straining bag so that any further solids escaping the basket will be removed by straining. Pour the contents of the first (unlined) container back in the top of the press basket. The bed of solids already in the basket will act to strain out most of the solids in this liquid.

Place the press plate (or press plate halves and wood blocks) on top of the fruit solids and begin pressing. The press plate should remain level during pressing. Apply force intermittently, allowing time for the juice to run after each turn or two of the screw. As the solids become more compressed, go more slowly and/or wait longer before applying more force.

When the container (lined with the straining bag) is about 3/4 full, replace it with another lined container. If a second lined container is not available, use the unlined container temporarily until the lined container is available again. Lift the straining bag and siphon or pour the liquid that drains from it to the secondary fermenter(s). Repeat the above process as you continue pressing. If solids build up in the straining bag, it may be hand squeezed to recover the contained liquid.

The remaining wine or juice in the primary fermenter can also be strained free of solids separately using the straining bag. These solids may be added to the press basket for pressing if desired. One way or another all liquid should be strained to remove as much of the solids as practical.

After each use of the press, make sure everything is well rinsed so that fruit acids will not corrode the metal parts. Presses with ratchet mechanisms or other moving metal parts may be lubricated with a small amount of Vaseline.



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