

Using 5 U.S. gallon kegs

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Cleaning & Sanitizing

Cleaning:

Clean like you would any other brewing equipment with a recommended cleaner (Ecolox, PBW, etc.). Do not use bleach or any chlorine based cleaner since this chemical is corrosive to stainless steel.

Sanitizing:

- Just before filling the keg with beer, add a 2 to 3 litre solution of a no-rinse sanitizer (Aseptox, Star San, etc.) to the keg.
- Swish it around to make sure that all interior surfaces have been sanitized.
- Connect the gas and liquid connectors to the keg (make sure the liquid line is connected on the other end with a tap and that the gas line leads to a regulator and CO2 tank), dial the pressure to 10 PSI (Pounds per Square Inch) and open the tap – this will allow the liquid “straw” inside the keg, the liquid tubing and the tap to also get sanitized.
- Disconnect both liquid and gas connectors and empty the keg of sanitizer. It is now ready to fill.

Kegging

Since the kegs have a capacity of 19 litres (5 U.S. gallons), if you are making 23 litres of beer (5 Imp. Gallons or 6 U.S. gallons), you will have to prepare enough bottles for bottling 4 litres. Add the recommended amount of sugar to these bottles and fill these first. Then fill the keg (always using a siphon), being careful to add the least amount of oxygen possible.

Force Carbonation:*

Since the newly kegged beer is presently at room temperature, here is what to do to try and inject as much carbon dioxide (CO2) as possible:

- Connect the gas line (which is connected to a regulator and CO2 tank) only.
- Open the CO2 tank all the way.
- Increase the pressure dial on the regulator to around 25 PSI.
- Roll or shake the keg for 3 minutes.
- Stop & take a break for about 15 to 20 minutes, leaving the gas connected.
- Repeat the rolling for an additional 3 minutes.
- Disconnect the gas and either place the keg in the fridge or store it in a cool place for future use.

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Service:

- Once the force carbonation is done, wait at least 12 hours before connecting the gas – this will allow the CO2 that was injected to get better absorbed in the beer as the beer cools in the fridge.
- Then connect the gas and liquid connectors and dial the PSI on the regulator to 10 – 12 PSI.
- You can now start drinking from the keg. The beer will be lightly carbonated at this stage, but it will continue to improve over the next couple of weeks.

*Alternatively to doing the force carbonation step, the full keg can be connected to the gas line and refrigerated. The CO2 will slowly get absorbed over time and the beer will start to be ready to drink after at least 2 weeks.

Notes

- Always leave the CO2 connected to the beer, unless you will be storing the kegged beer for future use. This will allow the beer to keep absorbing CO2 until it reaches the pressure indicated on your PSI dial (0 – 60 dial).
- You may need to adjust the PSI pressure over the time you are serving from that particular keg. The serving temperature (temperature of the refrigerator), the amount of beer left in the keg, type of beer, etc. will all play a role in what PSI pressure will give you the best results.
- When you empty a keg, clean it right away with an appropriate cleaning solution. The longer you leave the keg empty without cleaning it, the more difficult it will be to clean.
- The other dial on the regulator (0 – 2000) indicates the internal pressure of the CO2 tank. It will indicate about 500 – 800 PSI if the tank is cold (i.e. in the fridge) and about 800 – 1000 PSI if the tank is at room temperature (the higher the temperature, the higher the pressure). It is not an indicator of how much CO2 is left in the tank. It will, however, indicate zero when the tank is empty. A 5 lb CO2 tank should last for about 10 to 12, 5 U.S. gallon kegs (carbonating and serving) before it empties.
- It is recommended to regularly use an appropriate lubricant (“keg lube”) on the liquid and gas posts of the keg, as well as on the o-ring of the lid.
- Inspect the o-rings regularly to make sure that none of them are cracked or broken.

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