Re-Hydrating Wine Corks

How to Re-Hydrate Dry/Hard Corks

Helpful Info:

You can determine whether your corks are too dry by testing one going into and the removing from a bottle; if they crack (or worse, break), then they are too hard and need to be re-hydrated.

※ Corks need to be only soft enough to be usable in your corkscrew.

※ You can make them too moist!

Too Moisturized is Worse, and Here’s Why

Corks lose their expandability when they go above 5% - 8% moisture, and as such they will no longer fit into your bottle.

※ If you are able to get cork a bottle with one that has been too re-hydrated, it can often lead to the cork breaking off in the bottle.

How to Properly Re-Hydrate Corks:

#1 Clean your corks, making sure they are free of dirt and dust, and then place in a seal-able plastic bag.

#2 Add Distilled Water (sulfite free) in the following amounts:
   - Add 0.4 ml / for 10 corks
   - Add 4.0 ml / for 100 corks
   - Add 40 ml / for 1,000 corks

#3 Seal in Plastic Bag, and let sit for 2-7 days while corks re-hydrate, checking expandability every two days.
**Synthetic Corks**

Synthetic corks are made from inert synthetic resins, some wineries have tried them, mainly for short-term wines. They have to be put in with a heavy-duty capper, and can only be extracted with a good worm-type corkscrew wielded by a strong hand. Further development is needed before the home wine maker could put them to use without the use of a floor corkscrew. Nomacorc is the exception as it is made from an extrusion process with uniform, small closed cells that provide a superior seal to traditional synthetic corks which are moulded.

**Agglomerate Corks**

Agglomerated corks are made from chipped cork pieces ground to a specific size and glued together with non-reactive polyurethane glue. Inexpensive and easy to handle, these are suitable for wines that will be held for six months to a year. Agglomerate corks have high resilience and offer a good seal. Usually they come with a bevelled edge.

**Natural Corks**

The Natural straight wine cork is a cylindrical stopper punched directly from the cork, manually or automatically. It is a 100% natural product. The corks are then sorted by an optical cork sorting machine before being washed using a hydrogen peroxide based solution. They are then dried and sorted manually into finer classes. The process ends with branding in accordance with the customers’ specifications and a surface treatment suitable for the intended use.

**Colmated (Bellcork)**

The Colmated wine cork (also known as the Bellcork) is made of natural cork and then treated with a colmatation process which involves a glue used to combine cork particles to fill the outer imperfections of the cork. This process combined with the surface treatment gives the “Bellcork” cork improved sealing ability. Usually comes with a bevelled edge.

**Additional Closure Options**

- **T Cork Stopper Nat. Cork 19.2mm diam (Package of 1000)**
- **T Cork Stopper Nat. Cork 19.2mm diam (Package of 1000)**
- **Nomacorc Classic Wine Corks (100 Pack)**
- **Nomacorc Classic Wine Corks (1000 Pack)**

**WINE CORK SELECTION**

**WHAT CORK IS RIGHT FOR YOU?**

There are several things to consider when selecting the right cork for your purpose and cellaring conditions.

**TIME**

Estimate the length of time you realistically expect to store your wine before drinking.

**BEVEL**

This is the tapered edge that some of the less expensive corks have around the top and bottom of the cork. It is to allow easier insertion with hand held corkscrews. Take into account that the bevel does reduce the amount of surface area in contact with the neck of the bottle and it is this contact that prevents the passage of wine past the cork.

**LENGTH & DIAMETER**

Primarily wine corks are available in two lengths – 38mm (1.5 inches) and 44mm (1.75 inches) – and in three diameters – 21mm, 22mm, 24mm (in USA and Canada they are known as #7, #8 and #9). The length and diameter are related to the sealing ability of the cork. Where you compare corks in the same grade, the cork with the longest length and largest diameter will give the greatest sealing capability. Floor corkscrews can be used on all corks, but if you are using plunger or hand corkscrews you may need to opt for the narrower and shorter corks.

**Remember …**

This cheap cork isn’t always the best deal, and if you do decide to keep some bottles for the future, you may find yourself having to re-cork them in a few years.