

# Cider Making

Okay, now that you have your cider ... What exactly do you do with it? Read on ...

First check your starting gravity ... This will give you an indication of final alcohol content based on starting gravity: 1.040 - 5.1%, 1.045 - 5.8%, 1.050 - 6.5%, 1.055 - 7.2%, 1.060 - 7.8%, 1.065 - 8.6%, 1.070 - 9.2%, 1.075 - 9.9%, 1.080 - 10.6%, etc.

It is up to you to decide how strong you want to make your cider; do you want a low alcohol drinking cider or an apple wine? To raise the gravity in your cider you will need to add 2 ounces of sugar per gallon of cider to raise your gravity by .005 - for example: to raise your gravity from 1.040 to 1.055, you need to add 6 ounces of sugar.

We added sulfites to the cider during pressing to keep the color and kill off any bacteria the cider may have had; you will need to allow your cider to sit for 24 hours before adding yeast. (If using your own cider, you will need to add 1 campden tablet, crushed per gallon of cider and allow it to sit for 24 hours.) It is suggested you add any additional sugars and yeast nutrient during this 24 hours. It is recommended that you add 1 teaspoon of yeast nutrient per gallon of cider. Then let it rest until tomorrow.

Then make your yeast starter and allow it to sit until the 24 hour period has passed. This recipe will make enough yeast starter for 5 gallons of cider.

Combine:	2 cups warm water	¼ teaspoon citric acid
	2 Tablespoons sugar	1 package dry wine yeast
	½ teaspoon yeast nutrient	

Cover with stopper and airlock, or cover loosely with plastic wrap. Set aside.

Now, it is important to aerate your cider well by stirring it vigorously. We are doing this to stir the sulfites out of solution so that the yeast starter will be able to start fermenting in your cider. **Stir very vigorously** ... Till it is **very foamy** on top.

Pitch the yeast starter in, cover and attach your airlock. If all goes well, your cider should be fermenting merrily along by the next morning. If nothing happens, then you must repeat the yeast starter step and the vigorous stirring. The reason it has not started to ferment is because there were still sulfites in solution.

Your primary fermentation should go anywhere from 1 - 3 weeks. Then you will need to rack the cider into glass, filling it as close to the top of the carboy as possible. Allow it to continue fermentation until done, racking as needed if sediment builds up. Always be sure to top the cider to prevent oxidation from an excessive airspace. You can top with additional cider or water if necessary.

Your cider will be done when there is no longer signs of fermentation and the cider has cleared. If the cider is the way you like it at this point, bottle it. If it needs adjustment as in sweetening, adding acid, fruit flavors or spices; be sure to add ¼ teaspoon potassium sorbate per gallon of cider at least a day before making any adjustments. The potassium sorbate will kill the yeast and keep it from fermenting the sugar or flavorings you add. If you are kegging your cider, the potassium sorbate is not necessary.