

LONGHORN BARRELS

Barrel Use and Maintenance

Congratulations on the purchase of your new Longhorn Barrel! We pride ourselves in handcrafting the finest American White Oak barrels. With proper use and upkeep, our barrels are designed to last up to 10 years. Please take time to read the instructions thoroughly before altering your barrel in any way. A properly maintained barrel is vital to the success of your recipe and longevity of your barrel investment.

There are 4 steps that should be followed to properly use your new oak barrel.

STEP 1: CURING THE BARREL

STEP 2: AGING IN THE BARREL

STEP 3: STORING THE BARREL

STEP 4: CLEANING THE BARREL

CLEANING KIT INSTRUCTIONS

Before moving forward, take a minute to check over the entire barrel for any defects in production or damages incurred during shipment. While both are uncommon, the occasional defect happens and it is always easier to correct the issue as soon as possible.

Check the entire barrel for the following:

Staves: Cracks and dislocated staves are faulty. Gaps between the staves are fine and should seal during the curing process to follow.

Chime: Check for any large gaps

Croze: Check for any large gaps

Hoops: Occasionally hoops will become dislodged; we do not use glue, nails or staple to keep them intact. As the barrel hydrates they will re-secure.





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Curing your barrel is the process of hydrating the wood staves. In doing so, the oak swells to form a natural barrier, which seals any leaks. A proper cure takes time, but when done correctly it can last the lifespan of the barrel. These instructions will provide you the tools you need to feel comfortable curing your barrel for the first time. Before you get started, there is one thing you need to understand:

ALMOST EVERY BARREL WILL LEAK

When you first fill your barrel with water, every barrel we've cured has leaked, some more than others. Some initial leaking is completely normal, but as a new barrel owner this will be your biggest concern. We receive several questions and emails from our newest customers, but after they give it a day or two soaking up the water the leaks are all but gone. We recommend going through the entire curing process and if the barrel is still leaking, start over and try one more time from step 1. If after two curing attempts the barrel continues to leak, contact us for some alternate methods. If the barrel just won't stop leaking, we will get a replacement sent out to you.

There are two methods to choose from when curing your new oak barrel: the easy method (2-3 day process) or the fast method (as little as 2 hours). The main difference is time, although on a rare occasion they could take equal amounts of time. For new owners, we always recommend the easy method, as it provides the most accurate results with minimal effort. If you're in a hurry or just too excited to use your barrel, the fast method takes about 2 hours, but may require some additional time if leaks are still present.

As a new barrel owner, the curing process is the most critical. The only thing worse than a barrel leaking water is a barrel leaking alcohol! Follow these steps carefully and please contact us with any questions. Before you know it, you'll be a pro and on the way to oak aging in no time!

IMPORTANT: Use only chlorine free water. If you are using unfiltered tap water, simply set out the water overnight and the chlorine should dissipate.



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STEP 1: CURING INSTRUCTIONS

EASY METHOD (2 to 3 days)

Step 1: Insert spigot and fill barrel with warm water

Step 2: Insert bung into bunghole and place barrel on barrel stand

Step 3: Rest for 1 hour. (NOTE: Barrel will leak, do not be alarmed)

Step 4: After 1 hour, check for any visible leaks.

Step 5: You can apply a small amount of barrel wax directly to leaking areas, however this is not required. (Barrel Wax purchased seperately)

Step 6: Rest for an additional 24 to 72 hours (1-3 days)

Step 7: Barrel should be well hydrated at this point and without any leaks. If the barrel is still leaking, empty and repeat the process one more time. If after 5 days of hydrating the barrel is still leaking, please contact us for assistance.

Step 8: Drain water from barrel and rinse 3 times with clean water

Step 9: Remove the bung and spigot, and place the barrel bunghole side down. This will allow any remaining water to drain. The barrel will need to "surface dry" for a maximum of 1-2 hours.

NOTE: Surface drying is not required, but a good practice to avoid diluting your brew.

Step 10: Fill your barrel as soon as possible, either with your next recipe or a sanitizing solution for long term storage (see Storing the Barrel).

FAST METHOD (2 hours to 24 hours)

Step 1: Insert spigot and fill barrel halfway with warm water (chlorine free)

Step 2: Insert bung into bunghole and shake gently for 1 minute.

NOTE: Water may spray from the stave joints, but as the barrel hydrates the leaking should subside.

Step 3: Place the barrel on its head (spigot facing up). Rest for 20 minutes.

Step 4: Place the barrel on the barrel stand with bung facing up. Rest 15 minutes.

Step 5: Rotate the barrel with bung facing left. Rest 15 minutes.

Step 6: Rotate the barrel with bung facing right. Rest 15 minutes.

Step 7: Rotate the barrel with bung facing up. Rest 15 minutes.

Step 8: Visible leaks should be gone at this point.

Step 9: Fill the remainder of the barrel with hot water. Rest 10 minutes.

Step 10: Barrel should be well hydrated at this point and without any leaks. If the barrel is still leaking, rest for additional 24 hours. If after 5 days of hydrating there are still visible leaks, please contact us for assistance.

Step 11: Drain water from barrel and rinse 3 times with clean water

Step 12: Remove the bung and spigot, and place the barrel bunghole side down. This will allow any remaining water to drain. The barrel will need to "surface dry" for a maximum of 1-2 hours.

NOTE: Surface drying is not required, but a good practice to avoid diluting your brew.

Step 13: Fill your barrel immediately, either with your next recipe or a storing solution.



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STEP 2: AGING INSTRUCTIONS

At this point, your barrel should have undergone the curing process and there are no visible leaks. Now you are faced with a difficult decision; what do I age for my first batch? We suggest barrel aging one of your favorite spirits at first. A Bourbon or Tennessee Whiskey is a great first choice as it is familiar and can easily highlight the transformation over time. An added plus, the wood absorbs so much of the Bourbon/Tennessee Whiskey that it can infuse the flavor into the next 2 to 3 batches! Tequila is an amazing choice, just leave it to age for 4 to 6 weeks and taste how oak aged tequila transforms over such a short period of time. Whatever your favorite may be, just choose simple as you begin this journey. When you become more familiar with how the flavors develop, consider moving into blending spirits and recipes.

The barrel is prepped and ready to go, so the only thing left to do is fill it. Make sure the spigot is secured firmly inside the spigot hole with the knob turned 90 degrees in the "OFF" position. Carefully pour in your selection, put in the bung and set in a cool, dark area to rest. The barrel will do the rest of the heavy lifting; the only thing required of you is patience and the occasional taste test.

BARREL AGE	FIRST TEST	ADDITIONAL TEST
New Barrel (less than 4 aging cycles)	14 days	every 7 days
Seasoned Barrel (more than 4 aging cycles)	21 days	every 14 days

We have three suggestions when it comes to taste testing:

1. Keep notes, you'll use them again. No don't need to write a novel, just a few notes about the progress. It may seem like a little thing now, but in any subsequent batches they will be very useful.
2. Set a reminder! We always set a reminder on our phone, alerting us to test our batches in a few days or weeks.
3. Taste the barrel aged batch side-by-side with the original. See exactly how much the barrel changes it over time.

Newly charred barrels impart the oak flavor much faster than older barrels. Testing earlier will decrease the likelihood of too much oak flavor, what we call "over-oak". So pour a very small amount into a glass after 14 days and give it a quick taste. If you have an opportunity to compare it to the original, you'll start to notice it has mellowed out and picked up a little more of the oak than you are accustomed to. Being tempted to remove it from the barrel already, hold back the urge for at least another week and you'll thank us later. Taste again every 7 days, and remove it when it meets your needs.

Seasoned Barrel (more than 4 aging cycles) - After 3 or 4 batches, the charred staves mellow out slightly and it takes a little longer to achieve the same results. The taste tests are less frequent but still very important. Taste for the first time after 21 days, then every 14 days thereafter. Use the same procedures you would for a new barrel, the only thing that changed was the time between tastings.



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AGING CHART

Our aging chart should be used as a guideline, but the actual time you will need to barrel age is a personal preference. In the chart below, you can see the recommended amount of time to achieve 1 year of aging flavor. Again, age to what you want to drink and take it out when you prefer. Larger barrels will take longer to achieve the same results.

After the first batch, your comfort level will rise dramatically. Take what you've learned and apply it to your next batch. Keep in mind that whatever you aged in the barrel previously is ingrained into the wood and the flavor will infuse into your next batch unless you clean it.

BARREL SIZE	SURFACE AREA	AGING DAYS (equivalent to 1-year)
1-liter	206 sq. inches	58 days = 1 year in 200L barrel
2-liter	297 sq. inches	80 days = 1 year in 200L barrel
3-liter	398 sq. inches	90 days = 1 year in 200L barrel
5-liter	569 sq. inches	105 days = 1 year in 200L barrel
10-liter	892 sq. inches	134 days = 1 year in 200L barrel
20-liter	1382 sq. inches	173 days = 1 year in 200L barrel



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STEP 3: STORING INSTRUCTIONS

We know that your barrel won't be in constant use. The most important thing to remember is to keep the barrel hydrated and in contact with liquid. Storing the barrel short term or long term is very simple, but neglecting the barrel and allowing the staves to dry out could create some leaking issues. For long-term storage (2+ months), we highly recommend setting a reminder, allowing you to verify the solution has not dissipated beyond 50% capacity.

Included in each barrel purchase are sanitizing tablets, enough for you to make two sanitizing storage solutions. See the chart below for the proper tablet-to-water ratio. The tablets will kill existing bacteria and limit the growth of any wild yeast inside the barrel. No matter if you plan to store the barrel for 1 day or 1 year, use our sanitizing tablets to safely protect your investment.

DIRECTIONS (overnight sanitizing):

- Step 1: Using the chart, determine how many sanitizing tablets are required based on the barrel size
 - Step 2: In a separate container mix the sanitizing tablets and water, ensuring the tablets are fully dissolved
 - Step 3: Insert solution into the barrel
 - Step 4: Fill any remaining space inside the barrel with water
 - Step 5: Insert bung
 - Step 6: Store in a cool area away from sunlight
 - Step 7: Let the solution to rest in the barrel for 24 hours
 - Step 8: When ready to age your next batch, empty the solution and rinse 3 times with warm water
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DIRECTIONS (long term storage):

- Step 1: Using the chart, determine how many sanitizing tablets are required based on the barrel size
 - Step 2: In a separate container mix the sanitizing tablets and water, ensuring the tablets are fully dissolved
 - Step 3: Insert solution into the barrel
 - Step 4: Fill any remaining space inside the barrel with water
 - Step 5: Insert bung
 - Step 6: Store in a cool area away from sunlight
 - Step 7: After 90 days, repeat steps 1-6
 - Step 8: When ready to age your next batch, empty the solution and rinse 3 times with warm water
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Sanitizing Tablets Chart

1-liter	+	1/2 tablet	+	1-liter water
2-liter	+	1 tablet	+	2-liter water
3-liter	+	2 tablets	+	3-liter water
5-liter	+	3 tablets	+	5-liter water
10-liter	+	5 tablets	+	10-liter water
20-liter	+	10 tablets	+	20-liter water



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STEP 4: CLEANING KIT INSTRUCTIONS

One of the most important aspects of owning an oak barrel is understanding how to properly maintaining it. The Longhorn Barrel cleaning kit provided in each barrel order is intended for one full cleaning use and one long-term storage solution. By the end of this tutorial, you will better understand:

- What is used to clean the barrel
- When to clean your barrel
- How to properly clean the barrel

The best way to clean your barrel is to use a Longhorn Barrels cleaning kit. If you ordered a barrel from us, this is included in your shipment. Your kit includes a pre-measured amount of cleaning products, prepared specifically for your barrel size.

So when exactly should I clean my barrel? If you're using the barrel for the first time, it does not require any cleaning or sterilizing. Just follow the curing instructions and start aging right away. If you're cleaning the barrel after a recent brew, then when you clean depends on what you have brewed.

BEER & WINE: AFTER EACH USE

Beer and wine promote natural bacterial development. While this creates an amazing drink, it does require an extra level of work and needs to be cleaned after each use.

SPIRITS: EVERY 3-4 MONTHS OR AS NEEDED

After aging spirits, barrels do not require regular cleaning. We recommend cleaning them every 3-4 months (at a minimum once every 6 months). In the interim, you can clean them between uses or leave it untouched and infuse your next batch with what is leftover.

When you clean the interior of the barrels, you are effectively removing any bacteria that have embedded into the crevices of the wood staves. Unfortunately there is no way to combat the negative effects of barrel aging in wood. With our provided cleaning kit, we take the guesswork out of long-term maintenance and give you everything you need to keep your barrel in top shape. The steps are relatively simple and once you've done it once, you'll soon realize that all the worry was for naught. We highly suggest taking the time to read through each step before starting Step 1. Just like any good recipe, you'll want to make sure you have all of the necessary equipment standing by as well as planned your time accordingly.



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STEP 4: CLEANING KIT INSTRUCTIONS (page 2)

Step 1: In a separate container, mix the BarolKleen and warm water based on the BarolKleen Solution chart:

BarolKleen Solution Chart

1-liter	+	1 pouch	+	1-liter water
2-liter	+	1 pouch	+	2-liter water
3-liter	+	1 pouch	+	3-liter water
5-liter	+	1 pouch	+	5-liter water
10-liter	+	1 pouch	+	10-liter water
20-liter	+	2 pouches	+	20-liter water

NOTE: For the 20-liter barrel, the cleaning kit includes 2 pouches of BarolKleen and both should be used. All other barrel sizes contain 1 pouch with a pre-measured amount.

Step 2: Insert spigot into the barrel and ensure it is in the "OFF" position.

Step 3: Carefully transfer the BarolKleen solution to the barrel.

Step 4: Add bung to the top of the barrel.

Step 5: Let BarolKleen solution rest in the barrel for a minimum of 24 hours, maximum of 72 hours

Step 6: Drain the BarolKleen solution.

Step 7: After the BarolKleen solution has thoroughly drained, insert spigot and ensure it is in the "OFF" position.

Step 8: Next is neutralizing the interior of the barrel. In a separate container, mix the pre-measured amount of citric acid and warm water based on your barrel size.

Citric Acid Chart

1-liter	+	1 pouch	+	1-liter water
2-liter	+	1 pouch	+	2-liter water
3-liter	+	1 pouch	+	3-liter water
5-liter	+	1 pouch	+	5-liter water
10-liter	+	1 jar	+	10-liter water
20-liter	+	1 jar	+	20-liter water

Step 9: Carefully transfer the citric acid solution to the barrel.

Step 10: The barrel is only half full at this point. Add bung to the top of the barrel and gently swish solution around for 2-3 minutes.

Step 11: Let citric acid solution rest in the barrel for a minimum of 15 minutes, maximum of 30 minutes.

Step 12: Drain the citric acid solution by removing the bung and turning the spigot to the "ON" position.

Step 13: After the citric acid solution has thoroughly drained, turn spigot to the "OFF" position.

Step 14: Rinse 3 times with warm water.

IF READY TO AGE YOUR NEXT BATCH, PROCEED TO STEP 15. IF STORING THE BARREL LONG TERM, REVIEW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR "STORING THE BARREL".

Step 15: After the barrel is empty, remove both the bung and spigot. Turn the barrel upside down on the barrel stand and allow to surface dry for no more than 3 hours.