



**BREWER'S**  
*EST.* **BEST** <sup>1992</sup>®

## **Basic Guide to Kegging**

### **Cleaning/Sanitizing**

#### **To Clean**

1. Completely dismantle the keg by taking off the body connects, dip tubes, o-rings, the keg lid, etc., and put the small fittings into a bowl (Be careful of any sharp edges near the opening of the keg).
2. If the keg is dirty or has residue left over from the last use, use some brewery cleaner and some warm water to fill the keg at least half way.
3. Use a carboy brush or a soft scrub pad (not steel wool) to clean the shell of the keg inside and out, paying close attention to the areas that are hidden to make sure they are cleaned thoroughly.
4. Clean the beverage-out dip tube with a ¼" line brush and some cleaning solution.
5. Clean and inspect all pieces such as o-rings, poppets, body connects, etc., for signs of wear or breakage. Replace if needed.
6. Drain the keg and small parts and rinse them well.
7. Reassemble the keg.

#### **To Sanitize**

1. Fill the keg completely with a properly diluted sanitizing solution.
2. Let the sanitizer sit in the keg for the recommended contact time.
3. Put the lid in a separate bowl filled with sanitizing solution and let this sit as well.
4. Once the lid has soaked in the sanitizer for the proper amount of time, put it onto the filled keg, making sure that it seals correctly.
5. Flip the closed keg over and let it sit for another 1-2 minutes. This will allow the sanitizer to get into all the areas in the keg including the dip tubes.
6. Push the sanitizer out with CO<sub>2</sub>. This is the recommended way, this will sanitize the serving lines as well as fill the shell with CO<sub>2</sub> rather than air.
7. Empty the keg.

#### **The CO<sub>2</sub> Setup**

The CO<sub>2</sub> setup consists of two main parts: the CO<sub>2</sub> tank and CO<sub>2</sub> regulator. We highly recommend that a CO<sub>2</sub> tank of 5 lbs. or more is used, along with a regulator (CO<sub>2</sub> tank not included). Although smaller, more portable systems are available, they are not very practical for carbonating.

#### **CO<sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide)**

CO<sub>2</sub> is a gas that will take liquid form at certain pressures and temperatures. This gas is what we use to both carbonate and serve beer. Being that CO<sub>2</sub> is in liquid form when in the tank, the tank must be upright when the tank is on and the regulator is hooked up. Turning the handle on the tank counterclockwise turns the tank on. CO<sub>2</sub> tanks need to be hydrostatic tested every 5 years. We recommend "swapping" your tank rather than having it filled, when possible. One 5 lb. CO<sub>2</sub> tank is usually enough to carbonate and serve 6 or more five-gallon Cornelius kegs.

### **The CO2 Regulator (Included w/ deluxe kit)**

The CO2 regulator essentially takes the pressure of the gas at the top of the tank and reduces it to a lower, controlled pressure. The regulator attaches to the tank with a female hex piece and uses a small plastic or rubber gasket (included with regulator) to ensure a good seal. The pressure going into the regulator is generally around 500-900 PSI, depending on the temperature of the tank.

The body of the regulator has two gauges. The one on top is the adjustable pressure and the one on the side reads the pressure of the gas in the tank. The gauge that measures the tank pressure can be a bit deceiving as it will show about 700-900 PSI if the tank is at room temperature, and 500-600 PSI at refrigeration temperature. This will remain fairly steady until most of the CO2 is gone from the tank. At that point, the gauge will start plummeting into the red, which means it is time to swap your tank for a full one. You can adjust the flow of CO2 by turning the knob on the main body of the regulator. To engage it, turn the knob clockwise. The more you turn it, the more the PSI will build. Once the desired pressure is reached, push the knob in to lock the pressure setting in place. Remember that you may notice some "drift" between PSI readings if the tank changes temperature. On the bottom of the regulator is an on/off valve commonly called a check valve. These allow for ease of turning the gas flow on and off, as well as protection from liquid working its way up into the regulator.

### **Connecting the CO2 Regulator**

The regulator connects to the keg via a gray gas-in quick disconnect. The gas-in quick disconnect is connected to the regulator with 1/4" I.D. tubing. You should not have a problem with leaking, etc., as long as the tubing is clamped down tightly.

### **Checking the Kegging System For Leaks**

When you first build your gas system, or add any modifications, you should always check for gas leaks. The easiest way to check for leaks is to use a sanitizing solution that is known for foaming in conjunction with a spray bottle or washcloth. Spray or cover all fittings, connections, and seals with sanitizer solution and check for bubbles.

### **Filling and Sealing the Keg**

Transfer your finished beer into the sanitized keg, attach the lid and lock it into place.

### **Slow-Force Carbonating Your Beer**

Your beer can be carbonated to your desired level a number of different ways. Keep in mind that all the methods of carbonating assume that an adjustable pressure CO2 regulator is being used and that the beer is at or below 60°F as CO2 is more readily absorbed into cold liquids. It is recommended that beer be kept very cold to allow the beer to absorb CO2 more easily. Please note that carbonation times may vary depending on the style of the beer, density of the liquid and the method used to carbonate. Attach the gas-in quick disconnect onto the inlet post of the keg. Open the tank completely and adjust the regulator to a maximum of 20 PSI and allow the gas to flow to the keg by opening the check valve. You will hear the gas entering the keg. Pull on the relief ring three times counting to five between each pull. This will allow any remaining oxygen to escape while being replaced with CO2. After the last pull on the ring allow the gas to enter the keg for ten seconds. This will "set the seal" on the lid of the keg. Now, adjust the pressure to the desired setting. Check your keg for leaks. Allow your beer to carbonate for five to seven days, checking your beer frequently to make sure the carbonation level is right for you.

### **Serving**

Once carbonation is achieved, reduce the pressure on the regulator to 4 – 5 PSI, and bleed the excess pressure through the relief ring. Place your 1/4" tubing over the barb on the black quick disconnect and tighten the clamp. Place your picnic faucet in the opposite end and tighten the clamp, being careful not to over tighten the clamp and crush the barbs on the faucet. Next, place the black liquid disconnect onto the liquid out post on the keg. You may need to pour a glass or two get rid of excess foam. Once the beer is pouring evenly serve and enjoy!