

SWE Wine Faults and Imbalances Kit – Instructions for Home Use

1. You will need to buy eight bottles of identical wine. Before you go shopping, take note of whether you purchased a fault kit for 750 ml. bottles or 1.5 L bottles. SWE recommends using an inexpensive, neutral white wine such as a California Pinot Grigio. Recommended brands include Sutter Home, Woodbridge, Three Bandits, or other comparable products. Make sure all eight bottles are the same vintage.
2. Label the bottles, using a large black marker, as follows:
 - Control
 - Sugar
 - Acid
 - Acescence
 - Tannin
 - Sulfur Dioxide
 - Oxidation
 - Alcohol

Chilling the bottles is not necessary, and is not normally done for the CWE Exam.

3. Before adding any components, check all wines for cork taint or other off-odors.
4. The night before your practice session, pour off enough from each bottle to be able to add the components without overflowing the bottle. Add the following components to the prepared bottles:
 - Sugar (Sucrose)
 - Acid (Tartaric Acid)
 - Acescence (Acetic Acid and Ethyl Acetate combined)
 - Tannin (Grape Tannin)
 - Alcohol (Ethanol)
 - Oxidation (Hydrogen Peroxide) - For the oxidation fault, you must expose the wine to air by decanting it after the Hydrogen Peroxide is added. After adding the fault, pour the altered wine into an open vase, large pitcher, or open-top decanter. Pour it back and forth several times and then let it sit for about ten minutes.

Note: The sulfur dioxide fault should not be prepared until the next morning.

5. Be sure and shake and mix the components into the wines thoroughly. This is especially important for the sugar and tannin faults, as they take a while to dissolve. When mixing the wines, be sure and re-cork the bottle tightly enough so you don't lose liquid while shaking. Additionally, be sure and uncork the bottle after shaking to allow excess air build-up to escape; then re-cork the bottle for the night. Otherwise, the corks may "blow" during the night.
6. The morning of your practice session, mix the Sulfur Dioxide (Metabisulfite) fault.
7. To start your session, set yourself up with a tasting placemat arranged with 9 glasses. Label one glass as "control" and pour a two-ounce serving. Label the remaining eight glasses with numbers

or the name of the faults (plus the control sample), depending on whether or not you want your first practice session to be “blind” or not.

8. Take some time to evaluate the control sample wine, and proceed with the altered wines and the additional control sample, noting how each differs from the control sample and from each other.
9. During the CWE Exam, you will need to identify six out of the eight unidentified wine samples, which will include all seven faults and one unaltered sample of the control wine.