

Taste and Purity of the Alcohol from Stills

How can I improve the taste and smell after distillation?

AIRSTILL

Using the carbon filter (looks like a polo mint) that comes with your machine is a must. We would recommend only using this to do 1.2 litres of diluted spirit. Soak in hot water first for 20 mins before use. This will activate the carbon (you might hear a hissing noise). Run the distillation through it at less than 50%ABV and repeat this if necessary. If there is still a smell/taste then repeat with another carbon disc and run the distillate through twice. If you are still finding there are flavours and smells you don't like we need to look at bigger filters. Some people have more sensitive taste buds than others.

We have several filters which are available. There are the Spiritworks Carbon Filter, the In Line and the EZ filter.

Both the Inline and the EZ Carbon Filter use the same hard compacted carbon filter which needs to be activated before use. Soak in hot water for 20mins. The carbon will start to hiss. Once you have done this you can use it.

The Spiritworks uses a loose granular carbon of the highest quality and in our opinion offers the best solution to providing pure alcohol. The carbon in this case is activated and cleaned before use by running water through the column containing the fresh carbon. It's extremely economical as the cost per fill is very low (assuming you are buying carbon in 1 kilo bags). We loved the Z Filter, but this was discontinued in 2013 and this is the best replacement for it as it works in very much the same way.

With all filters we recommend the alcohol (which must be diluted to below 50%ABV otherwise the carbon is just no effective) should be run through the carbon block. Each cartridge (or granular fill) should do approx. 15 litres of diluted spirit. Run it through and then repeat the process with the same carbon. If this doesn't seem to do the trick, then repeat it with a fresh carbon cartridge (or carbon fill) and run it through twice. Subsequent runs will always improve the taste but the improvements will get less and less each time it's done. Once the carbon has been used it should not be used again. Always run the alcohol through in one go (don't run some today and some more tomorrow). If the carbon dries out it can't be used again.

If this doesn't work then you can look at the yeast and sugar if you haven't already done so. You should use the Pure Yeast with Turbo Carbon (this prevents the yeast giving off flavours) for cleanest results. The Classic yeast adds flavours which aren't great if you are making white spirit but are beneficial if you are doing Dark Spirit. Glucose Powder/Brewing Sugar makes for a cleaner taste than ordinary granular sugar so it's well worth having a go with this although the costs are slightly more. Turbo Clear is important for not just clearing the "wash" but will also strip out some flavours we don't want. Remember the temperature as well during fermentation if, maintained at a constant 20C, will be really good allowing maximum alcohol in the wash and maximum purity.

T500

Best way is to filter the alcohol using carbon. This will remove some of the flavours and taste and make the alcohol taste cleaner We have several filters which are available. We stock the Spiritworks Granular Carbon Filter, the In Line Filter and the EZ Filter.

Both the Inline and the EZ Carbon Filters use the same hard compacted carbon filter which needs to be activated before use. Soak in hot water for 20mins. The carbon will start to hiss. Once you have done this you can use it.

The Spiritworks Granular Carbon Filter uses a loose granular carbon of the highest quality and in our opinion offers the best solution to providing pure alcohol. The carbon in this case is activated and cleaned before use by running water through the column containing the fresh carbon. It's extremely economical as the cost per fill is very low (assuming you are buying carbon in 1 kilo bags). We loved the Z Filter, but this was discontinued in 2013 and this is the best replacement for it as it works in very much the same way.

With all filters we recommend the alcohol (which must be diluted to below 50%ABV otherwise the carbon is just no effective) should be run through the carbon block. Each cartridge (or granular fill) should do approx. 15 litres of diluted spirit. Run it through and then repeat the process with the same carbon. If this doesn't seem to do the trick, then repeat it with a fresh carbon cartridge (or carbon fill) and run it through twice.

Subsequent runs will always improve the taste, but the improvements will get less and less each time it's done. Once the carbon has been used it should not be used again. Always run the alcohol through in one go (don't run some today and some more tomorrow). If the carbon dries out it can't be used again. If this doesn't work, then you can look at the yeast and sugar you are using.

You should use the Pure Yeast with Turbo Carbon (this prevents the yeast giving off flavours) for cleanest results. The Classic yeast adds flavours which aren't great if you are making white spirit but are beneficial if you are doing Dark Spirit. Glucose Powder/Brewing Sugar makes for a cleaner taste than ordinary granular sugar so it's well worth having a go with this although the costs are slightly more. Turbo Clear is important for not just clearing the "wash" but will also strip out some flavours we don't want. Remember the temperature as well during fermentation if, maintained at a constant 20C, will be really good and when distilling the closer to 50C on the outlet temperature as you can (recommended to be 50 to 65C). 65C will give us maximum speed but the quality won't be so good. I can't tell you how important it is to look at both these temperatures if you are wanting to make top quality spirit.