

■ Wine Cellar Setup Checklist

You don't need a medieval castle or a trust fund to start a wine cellar. This checklist keeps you organized (and stops you from storing wine next to your microwave). Print it, stick it on your fridge, and start building your mini-empire of bottles.

- ■ Pick a cool, dark spot (closet, basement, wine fridge). Avoid ovens and sunny windows.
- ■ Keep temperature steady (ideally 55°F).
- ■ Maintain humidity ~60–70%. No, spraying bottles with a water bottle doesn't count.
- ■ Buy or build racks (bottles stored horizontally).
- ■ Label bottles (future you won't remember that mystery red).
- ■ Starter wines to age: Bordeaux blends, Rioja Reserva, Napa Cab, Barolo.
- ■ Avoid cheap \$8 bottles — they won't magically turn into Chateau Lafite.
- ■ Track your collection (spreadsheet, app, or my Wine Journal PDF).
- ■ Budget build: ~\$900 = small fridge, racks, starter bottles.
- ■ Most important: have patience (wine isn't instant ramen).

Pro tip: Build slowly, drink strategically, and brag shamelessly to friends. Your future self (and your future palate) will thank you.