



Assembling and Using Your Kegging System:

Now that you have all the equipment needed to start kegging, here is how you set it all up:

1. Connect your gas CO2 regulator to your filled CO2 tank.
2. Slide hose clamps onto your gas line (usually 5/16" ID, sometimes 1/4 ID"). Connect your gas line to the shut-off valve barb on the regulator and to barb on the gas (grey) disconnect. Fasten hose clamps over the hose at each end.
3. Heat up some a coffee mug filled with water in your microwave until hot. Dip each end of your liquid line (typically 3/16" ID) into the water until the line becomes pliable. When the line has been softened, push it on to the barb for your liquid disconnect (black) then repeat to connect the line to your cobra picnic tap. If you hooking up to a tail piece for a shank, make sure you slide the hex nut (or wing nut) over hose before attaching the line to the tail piece.

Since the hardware is all set up, let's focus on preparing your keg for the beer:

1. Make sure that your keg is depressurized. This can be achieved by opening the pressure relief valve in the lid and holding it open until no more air rushes out. If your keg doesn't have a pressure relief valve (common with pin lock kegs and some older ball lock kegs), you can relieve the pressure by using a screw driver to push down on the poppet of the GAS disconnect post. To identify the gas disconnect post:
 - Ball locks will typically have IN embossed on the rubber near the base of the post
 - Pin locks disconnect posts will only have two (2) pins on the post.
2. Now that the keg is depressurized, it is safe to remove the keg lid. This is done by lifting the lid handle, pushing the lid down, then turning the lid 90° and lifting it out. Inspect the lid gasket and replace if it appears worn. Now that the lid has been removed you can remove disconnect posts. ****As a safety precaution, we recommend only removing the disconnect posts once the keg lid is removed to prevent injury when using equipment that holds liquid under pressure.**** There are a variety of disconnect posts used on kegs, but for ball lock the majority of them will be 7/8". It would be useful to have a 12-point deep well 7/8" socket for removing the posts (some gas post disconnects have a 12-point base). Some ball lock kegs will require a smaller crescent wrench to remove the disconnect posts. Pin lock kegs use a special pin lock socket tool that is available for purchase here at Siciliano's Market.
3. With the disconnect posts removed, you can now remove the dip tubes for inspection. The longer of the two tubes is the liquid tube, while the shorter one is for gas. Look at the gaskets, if they are starting to shred or have become thin and flattened then now is a good time to replace them. Inspect the dip tubes and clean with a dip tube brush and brewery wash then rinse components well with water.

4. Inspect the disconnect posts themselves, the poppet should sit flush with the top of the disconnect post. If the poppet is not flush, make sure the poppet assembly and disconnect post are free of any obstructions (hop matter, other sediments). Once all obstruction is removed and the poppet still does not sit flush the top of the disconnect post, then it is time to replace that poppet. The poppet can be removed simply by setting the disconnect post upright on your table or counter then pushing down hard on the poppet with a phillips screwdriver or similar blunt tool. If you do not have any spare poppets around, note the information on the side of your keg (ex. Challenger V, Cornelius, etc) and bring the poppet with you so to the store so that we set you up with the correct replacement. To install a new poppet, set the disconnect post upside down on your table or counter and push down on the poppet with mild force to try and seat it in post. If this method is unsuccessful, you can attempt to reseat the poppet later during reassembly by tightening the disconnect post with loose poppet inside onto the keg.
5. Now since the keg is fully disassembled, clean the inside of the keg using brewery wash with a tank brush (which is available at the store), you can use your carboy brush, but the tank brush is better suited for the job. Once clean and no residue remains, make sure to rinse the keg well with water. This is also a good time to disassemble your faucet and clean that too.
6. After cleaning and rinsing all your keg components, sanitize your gaskets, disconnects, dip tubes, and lid. You can use EasyClean or 1 Step, but we recommend upgrading to heartier sanitizer such as Iodophor or StanSan when keggling. Once all of your components are sanitized, reassemble your keg. When the keg is reassembled, pour sanitizer water into the keg and seal the lid. Shake the keg well and set it on it's top then bottom at least 15-30 seconds to ensure that all surfaces inside the keg come into contact with the sanitizing solution.
7. 7. Now that the keg is sanitized and full of sanitizer solution, hook it up to your CO2 supply and dispensing lines (make sure your faucet is reinstalled). First turn on your CO2 supply and inspect your system for leaks. Sometimes lid gaskets can be tricky to seat and will require some fiddling with. Check your disconnects, disconnect posts, and pressure relief valve for leaks. If you have a leak but can't determine exactly where it is, applying soapy water to the surfaces of your keg will help identify the location of the leak. After determining that your keg is leak free, run the sanitizer solution through your dispensing lines to flush them out and to ensure that they are clean and won't contaminate your beer. Ideally, you would want to use BLC to clean your beer lines, however that is not entirely necessary until you are running a permanent multi-keg system.

Getting Beer Into the Keg and Ready to Drink

1. With keg reassembled and sanitized and the dispensing lines and hardware cleaned, it is time to put beer into the keg. First turn off the CO2 supply and depressurize the keg before removing and placing the keg lid in sanitizer solution.
2. Having all of your siphoning equipment sanitized, siphon your beer into the keg much like you transfer anything else. Once the beer is transferred into the keg and the siphon tube removed, replace the keg lid.
3. 3. With the keg lid installed, turn the CO2 supply back on and check to ensure that the keg lid has sealed. At this point, you have to choose how to carbonate your beer: a) Slowly with low pressure –or– b) Quickly with high pressure. We typically recommend that someone who is new to kegging stick to the more reliable method of carbonating beer slowly under low pressure since it is more reliable and entails less risk.

- To carbonate beer slowly under low pressure is easy, it just requires patience. You simply connect your beer to your CO2 supply and set it at the desired serving PSI and let it sit for 5-8 days depending on temperature and pressure. The benefits of this method are that your beer will pour clearer since it has had time to settle in the keg, the level of carbonation will be predictable, and the chance of a kegging mishap occurring is greatly diminished.

- To carbonate beer quickly under high pressure is more tricky, especially when using the crank and shake method. The crank and shake method involves turning the CO2 pressure up to between 35 & 50 PSI and shaking the keg vigorously to aid in dissolution of CO2 into the beer. This method can carbonate a beer in a matter of hours instead of days, but it comes with higher risks. First it is easy to over carbonate the beer if it is left on the gas for too long. Secondly, small leaks if they were missed during kegging can quickly become serious leaks under high pressure risking beer being pushed out of the keg and on to the floor of your fridge and/or wasting some or all of the gas in your CO2 tank. Once your beer is carbonated, turn the CO2 down to serving pressure (this is dependent on your temperature and desired carbonation level).

For more information on kegging/draft systems please visit: <http://www.draughtquality.org/>