

Test for Acid (Red Juice)

-- L.K. Moore - Note: use 150 ml water to dilute color

Pigmentation in the red juice makes titration a bit more difficult than with colorless juice. There are 3 methods to copy with the problem: 1) decolorization of the red juice; 2) the use of both red and blue litmus paper to help determine the end point; 3) the following method that is recommended by the author:

Follow the method for white juice through the first 3 steps. Do not add the phenolphthalein as in step 4. At step 6 you will note that suddenly the dark-reddish solution turns to a blue-green color. This means that you are now close to the end point and can safely add the phenolphthalein. Continue to add the sodium hydroxide, a few drops at a time, swirl, and when the entire solution turns pink and holds you have achieved neutrality. Compute as with white juice.

I would be remiss to omit one other method of measuring acidity used by professionals and some advanced amateurs. Let me point out again that the methods described here, for both white and red wines, constitute a relatively cheap way to determine total acidity. It is a measure of potential acidity and loosely stated does not take into account the relative strengths of acids present. The other method of measuring acids determines the effective acidity and is compared on a scale that ranges from 0 to 14 with 7 being a neutral point. It is called pH measurement. Numbers less than 7 show increases in acidity and numbers greater than 7 show increasing alkalinity.

In addition to total acidity, pH measurements can be extremely helpful in determining future action.

--E. S. Phillips – *The Complete Handbook of Winemaking*