How to Taste Wine

On order
White before red, dry before sweet. Sip your wines right, and you’ll have a nice treat. By starting with the more delicate wines, you’ll be able to enjoy all their flavors. The bolder and sweeter the wine, the more it can overwhelm your successive choices.

Stem first!
Holding your glass by the stem, rather than the bowl, will help keep your wine at the perfect temperature.

Palate cleanser
Drinking room temperature water between varietals is a good way to cleanse your palate. The neutral flavors of crackers and bread help dispel lingering flavors as well.

The 5 S’s

1. See
Tilt your glass slightly and try viewing from different angles to see the wine’s color. Pro tip: wine that’s gone bad can have a brownish hue due to oxidation.

2. Swirl
Gently swirl the wine to aerate—this enhances its flavor and aroma. For a controlled swirl, place your glass on a flat surface and grasp the stem while swirling.

3. Smell
Don’t be shy! Put your nose in your glass to take in the wine’s aroma. Think about FEW—Floral, Earthy, Woodsy. What do you smell?

4. Sip
At long last, sip your wine and let it roll over your tongue. Consider its body and texture, sweetness or bitterness, tannins, acidity, and overall balance.

5. Savor
Swallow and savor the taste. Does the flavor linger or go away? Sometimes a wine’s finish can bring even more complexity to its overall taste.