

Freeze-Banking Yeast

Pros and Cons of Frozen Yeast Banking

- Pros
 - Lots of Yeast Ready to Use (Less trips to the LHBS)
 - Save \$\$\$
 - Easier/safer than other forms of re-harvesting yeast.
 - Yeast are harvested before exposure to contamination, alcohol, and high osmotic pressures from high-OG beers
- Cons
 - More effort compared to just pitching packs, tubes, or dry yeast
 - Some risk of bacterial contamination
 - Need more equipment (although I like equipment!)
 - Must make starter before using. Might need to step up starter to achieve proper pitch rate. Note that for most beers > 1.060, a starter is necessary even if you use store-bought liquid yeast.
 - Unknown viable yeast count after thawing
 - Dry yeast way, way easier and just as cheap.

Stuff you Need

- Glycerine (Walmart, with hand sanitizers! → \$2)
- 15ml Centrifuge tubes (10) (ebay → 50/\$10, some come with rack)
- Small pipette (5-15ml)/eyedropper (ebay → plastic/disposable = 100/\$5)
- Rack for tubes (DIY, or www.cynmar.com)
- Jar to mix glycerine/water
- Yeast “Smack-pack” Pouch (Wyeast) or Tube (White Labs) (optional: smack the pack in advance to guarantee viability)
- Star San mixed in a Spray Bottle (spray bottle from Home Depot)

Sanitize Everything

- Hands
- Tubes/Caps
- Pipettes
- Jar
- Tube Rack
- Pouch
- Draft-free area

The Process

1. Create the Glycerine/Water Mix
 - a. Combine 30ml glycerine and 30ml boiled water in a jar. Swirl to mix.
 - b. Microwave on high for 1 minute. Get a good quick boil. Wait a minute to cool.
2. Final tube contents: approx. 70% yeast slurry, 15% water, 15% glycerine
3. Using pipette, add 3ml of glycerine/water mix to tube.

4. Cap tubes and put in freezer for about 10 minutes (close to freezing). You want to the final mix (with the yeast) to freeze as fast as possible. Remove from freezer.
5. Open Pouch with sanitized scissors.
6. Using pipette, add yeast slurry from pouch to each tube to make a total of 12ml.
7. Cap all tubes. Optionally, tape caps down with electrical tape. **Shake-shake-shake**, place in rack and return to freezer. Might need to shake again in 5-10 minutes when tubes are near freezing.
8. Shake, place in rack, and freeze immediately. Might need to shake again in 10 minutes when tubes are near freezing
9. Avoid thawing! Use freezer packs and insulated lunch tote to guard against the defrost cycle.
10. Label with sharpie marker, or label ziplock baggie and segregate tubes/strains.