

The miraculous polypipe still!

A 96%+ still made from readily available plastic pipe parts. Very cheap, very effective, very easy.

A still for those of us that enjoy drinking more than we enjoy chemical engineering!

Are you looking for a way to produce plenty of inexpensive, high quality alcohol in the easiest and cheapest way possible?

If so, you have found the miraculous polypipe still! It is made from completely standard parts straight from the hardware and home-brew shop. There is no soldering or welding or anything difficult. The only tools used are a drill and a hacksaw. Better still, you can buy the whole thing pre-made for a lot cheaper than most other stills of comparable quality.

What are the specs?

The still is a reflux/fractionating still with two types of optional head. The column is 1.2m tall, stuffed with stainless steel scrubbers. This is what gives the 96% purity. The column is 1 inch in diameter, which does limit the power input to 800W, however it still produces at a good rate. You can produce 6L of 40% alcohol in around 4 hours. The two head options are a Nixon-stone style offset liquid management head, which is cheaper to buy, but a little trickier to run and requires more attention. The other option is a vapour management system with two condensers. It costs a little more, but it enables you to set it to its maximum output rate and leave it without worrying that the purity will drop. Both condensers contain a copper tube, which gives the all important copper contact which is purported to produce a smoother spirit. The only other materials are food grade polypropylene, which does not emit any taste or smell, and does not soften with heat and high alcohol content, and rubber stoppers, which have the same properties. Water flow-rate in the condensers is not critical in this design. An old evaporative cooler makes for a cheap, effective recirculating cooling system.

What does it look like?

Being made from polypipe, it is not much to look at, but it certainly does the job. Take a look at the photos below.



Figure 1 - The overall view



Figure 2 - The Nixon-Stone head



Figure 3 - Vapour management head

These photos do not really do justice, and I will work on better ones, but it gives a good idea.

<rant> It is not legal to distil alcohol in Australia. I am not selling these as alcohol stills. In countries that allow distilling, they will distil alcohol effectively. If you wish to put a 25L bucket on your still, make sure the law allows it. </rant>

