

# HOW TO READ A WHISKEY LABEL

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## NON-CHILL FILTERED

Chill filtering refers to a method used to remove residue by cooling whiskey down to between minus-10 and 4 degrees C before filtering. "Non-chill filtered" means this method was not used.

## STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

This legally regulated term ensures that nothing other than water—to meet the desired ABV—has been added to the whiskey or bourbon before bottling.

## PROOF/ALCOHOL BY VOLUME (ABV)

This is how strong the alcohol is. Most whiskeys fall between 40 and 46 percent alcohol by volume. The proof is simply the ABV doubled. Bourbons must fall between 80 and 125 proof.



## CASK STRENGTH (OR BARREL STRENGTH)

This term refers to whiskey that hasn't been substantially diluted. A lot of whiskeys are watered down to 40 to 46 percent ABV. The term, however, is not legally regulated. For bourbon, it's stricter. First, all bourbons must be made in the U.S. in a charred virgin American oak barrel (first use), comprised of 51 percent corn, bottled at the same ABV as when it entered the barrel, and not be diluted with anything other than water.

## SINGLE BARREL

Whiskeys combined in a single barrel are often designated as premium products, meaning the spirit was aged in one barrel and was not the result of combining the contents of several barrels together.

# OTHER FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

## HANDCRAFTED

In theory, "handcrafted" is supposed to mean the distillery is not fully automated, but the term is not legally regulated. However, this label states that it was produced in Fallon, which is significant because it signals a locally made product.

## AGED

This indicates how long the whiskey was aged before it was bottled. The age on the bottle must refer to the youngest ingredient in the whiskey and could include a blending of older whiskeys as well.

## BOTTLED IN BOND

Bottles designated with this phrase adhere to the U.S. government's aging and bottling Standards of Identity for distilled spirits under the Bottled-in-Bond Act of 1897. It was developed as a reaction to the contamination of American whiskey, which was prevalent at the time.

## FIRST BARREL RELEASE

Fancy sayings like this often have no real legal meaning but may tell you something interesting about the bottle. For bourbon, however, claiming something as a first barrel release is a historic definition meaning it's made from the first barrels to ever leave the barrelhouse and be released to the public.

## HIGH RYE

Another term not legally defined, "high rye" refers to bourbons containing 20 to 35 percent rye, contributing to a spicier flavor profile.

## BARREL NUMBER

This number is written to signal which barrel the liquor came from. Connoisseurs may taste subtle differences from barrel to barrel, and this helps them track favorites.

