

WSET® Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine (Diploma)

CHECKLIST: EXAMPLES OF TASTING TERMS

APPEARANCE									
Clarity	bright – clear – dull – hazy – (<i>faulty?</i>)								
Intensity	water-white – pale – medium (-) – medium – medium (+) – deep – opaque								
Colour	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>white</td> <td>lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>rosé</td> <td>pink – salmon – orange – onion-skin</td> </tr> <tr> <td>red</td> <td>purple – ruby – garnet – tawny – brown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(rim and core)</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	white	lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown	rosé	pink – salmon – orange – onion-skin	red	purple – ruby – garnet – tawny – brown	(rim and core)	
white	lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown								
rosé	pink – salmon – orange – onion-skin								
red	purple – ruby – garnet – tawny – brown								
(rim and core)									
Other observations	legs/tears, deposit, petillance, tints/highlights								
NOSE									
Condition	clean – unclean (<i>fault: oxidised – out of condition – cork taint – other</i>)								
Intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced								
Development	youthful – developing – fully developed – tired/past its best deliberate oxidation?								
Aroma characteristics	fruit – floral – spice – vegetal – other								
PALATE									
Sweetness	dry – off-dry – medium-dry – medium – medium-sweet – sweet – luscious								
Acidity	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high								
Tannin	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>level:</td> <td>low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high</td> </tr> <tr> <td>nature:</td> <td>eg ripe/soft vs unripe/green/stalky, coarse vs fine-grained</td> </tr> </table>	level:	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high	nature:	eg ripe/soft vs unripe/green/stalky, coarse vs fine-grained				
level:	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high								
nature:	eg ripe/soft vs unripe/green/stalky, coarse vs fine-grained								
Alcohol level	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high fortified (low/medium/high level?)								
Body	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – full								
Flavour intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced								
Flavour characteristics	fruit – floral – spice – vegetal – other								
Other observations	eg texture, balance								
Length	short – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – long								
CONCLUSIONS									
Quality	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding								
Reasons for quality	eg balance, concentration, complexity, length								
Origins/variety /theme	eg - location (country, region) eg - grape variety/varieties eg - production methods/climatic influences etc								
Price	(approximate retail price):								
Age (in years)	(age in years):								
Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing	Needs time to develop (<i>how long?</i>) – ready to drink, but can develop further (<i>how long?</i>) – ready to drink, but can keep (<i>how long?</i>) – at peak/drink soon – tired/past its best								

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AROMA AND FLAVOUR CHARACTERISTICS

Floral / Fruit	Floral	acacia, honeysuckle, chamomile, elderflower, geranium, blossom
	Perfume	rose, violet, iris, neroli, honey, soap
	Green Fruit	apple (green/ripe?), gooseberry, pear, custard apple, quince, grapey, amylic
	Citrus Fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, citrus peel (orange, lemon)
	Stone Fruit	peach, apricot (fresh/dried?), nectarine
	Tropical Fruit	banana, lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple
	Red Fruit	redcurrant, cranberry, raspberry, strawberry, red cherry, plum (fresh/baked?)
	Black Fruit	blackcurrant, blackberry, bramble, blueberry, black cherry
	Dried Fruit	fig, prune, raisin, sultana, kirsch, jamminess, cooked, baked, stewed
Spice / Vegetal	Unripeness	capsicum, grass, white pepper, leafiness, tomato, potato
	Herbaceous	grass, asparagus, blackcurrant leaf, pyrazine
	Herbal	eucalyptus, mint, medicinal, lavender, fennel, dill
	Cooked	cabbage, tinned vegetables (asparagus, artichoke, pea etc), black olive
	Sweet Spice	cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, vanilla
	Pungent	black pepper, liquorice, juniper
Other	Autolytic	yeast, biscuit, bread, toast, lees
	Dairy	butter, cheese, cream, yoghurt
	Mineral	earth, petrol, kerosene, rubber, tar, smoke, stony/steely, wet wool
	Oak	vanilla, butterscotch, toast, cedar, charred wood, smoke, acrid, resinous
	Kernal	almond, marzipan, coconut, hazelnut, walnut, chocolate, coffee
	Maturity	vegetal, mushroom, hay, wet leaves, forest floor, tobacco, gamey, savoury
Faults	Anisoles	mustiness, wet cardboard, TCA
	Brettanomyces	animal, leather, meaty, sticking plaster, vinyl, farmyard
	Oxidation	caramel, toffee, staleness, sherry aromas, aldehydes
	Volatile Acidity	vinegar, solvents, nail varnish remover, 'lifted'
	Reduction	mercaptans, cabbage, eggs, sweat, rubber, onion, garlic, blocked drains
	Other	beetroot/earth (geosmin), rot, mould

TEXTURE AND BALANCE

Component Balance	Sweetness	austere, drying unctuous, cloying, sticky
	Acid	tart, green, sour, acidic, lively, refreshing, zesty flabby, thick, heavy
	Tannin	thick, dense, rough, sinewy, robust, harsh, bitter, hard, dried-out well-integrated, supple, rounded, resolved
	Alcohol	delicate, light, thin warm, generous, hot, heady, spirity, burning
	Fruit	austere, severe, hollow, meagre, neutral well-defined, soft, juicy, fruit-driven, forward, generous
Texture	Tannin 'grain'	silky, talc-like, clay-textured, fine-grained, velvety powdery, chalky, grippy, furry, dusty, chunky, coarse
	Viscosity	watery, thin, fluid, supple creamy, fleshy, mouthcoating, oily, rich, soupy, thick
	Carbon Dioxide	petillant, effervescent, prickly, bubbly
Overall Impression	Ripeness	green, stemmy, cool-climate, refreshing over-ripe, baked, cooked, jammy, hot-climate, warming
	Freshness	vivid, well-defined, expressive evolved, tertiary, fading, dull, tired
	Harmony	well-structured, elegant, well-delineated, mellow, harmonious shapeless, angular, clumsy, disjointed