

Building a Kegerator

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ready Built Kegerator	Buy and bring it home	Expensive, around \$500. limited to 1 - 2 taps.
Converted Countertop Fridge	Less expensive than ready built	Difficult to find a usable fridge
Upright Fridge	Can hold up to 4 Kegs	Large and Heavy. Expensive
Chest Freezer	Usually Cheap, Can be converted with a collar. Many size options	Requires some woodworking ability to create the collar. Condensation issue need to be addressed
Upright Freezer	none	has the disadvantages of both an upright fridge and a chest freezer.

There are several things to consider when making or building a kegerator.

1. **Space** - How much room do you have available? If you have very little room available your options become more limited.
2. **Cost** - it is going to cost a couple hundred dollars. If you are building one yourself, the cost can be spread out, and you may have some items already.
3. **Amount of Storage** - Do you NEED 2 kegs on tap and a place to lagger? Do you need space for 4 Kegs? 12 Kegs?

These things all work the same as Cheap, Fast, and Easy - Pick any two.

I would recommend starting with the item that is **MOST** limiting, and working down from there.

Space: a standard fridge is about 2' wide. So you'll need to have a 2' x 4' space available, The door will have to open so you can load the kegs in. If you don't have that amount of space, you will need something that is top loading. Unless you have a patented ACME Room Stretcher, this is one of those non adjustable variables.

Cost: If you have the cash and want a simple solution, \$500 gets you a prebuilt single tap unit. If you can throw \$1600 at the solution, a really fancy 4 tap setup can arrive for you in a few days. If you have a old fridge that is sitting in the garage, \$60 and you can have a tap drilled and mounted in the door in about an hour. For most people it will be somewhere in between.

Amount of storage: If you are only worried about having 2 kegs on tap, you have a lot of solutions. If you want to have 5 kegs on tap, your only option is to get with a chest freezer and convert it.

Faucets: \$20 for standard crappy ones
 \$40 for forward sealing Perlick's
 \$60 for creamer faucets
 \$80 for stout faucets

Shanks: \$20 per shank

Tap Handles: \$4 black plastic
 \$60+ Nice Tap Handles

Plumbing: \$20 for the basic hardware, connector, and tubing. This gets more expensive as you add more taps.

Additional Items needed for a Chest Freezer Conversion

External Thermostat - Check Chiccompany.net, Hoptech.com, Amazon.com, or Micromatic.com
Should be around \$60

Humidity Control - 2 options. Chest Freezers have an increased amount of condensation that forms inside. This has to be addressed to avoid messes.

Option 1, DampRid about \$10 and supposedly works for a few months and then is thrown out

Option 2, EVA-dry EDV-E-500 about \$26. It is reusable and you plug it into an electrical outlet for 12 hours to recharge it.

If you have built a collar I recommend a long reach gripper. When you add several inches to the height of a chest freezer, it now becomes difficult to reach things at the bottom on the freezer. Things such as a can of boddingtons that you have to use a pair of grill tongs because they are the only thing you have that will reach and you end up poking a hole in the side of the can while lifting it out. \$8

How To Build One

Counter Height Fridge Conversion: This will likely use a tower. The usually run around \$100 dollars with a standard faucet. The fridge itself should usually be 4.4 Cu minimum size. A corny is 23 inches high, and 9 inches wide. The internal height of the fridges need to be looked at, so does the depth in front of the compressor hump. At 4.4 Cu you may have to cut the shelves off the door. Also, a freezer in the fridge will have to be dealt with. If it does have a freezer, it may be possible to unscrew the the metal plate of the freezer and CAREFULLY bend it down to the back wall. Most of the time the coolant runs though the shelf in the freezers. The popular Sanyo SR-4919 is no longer made, and is hard to find, because people looking for that one usually want them for Kegerator Conversion. I saw someone mention that he Oster OR5005M3M is an acceptable replacement. In all cases, the MAIN concern is the coolant lines in the top. If you rupture one of these lines, in addition to possibly spraying freon all over yourself cause bodily harm, you have ruined the fridge.

Upright Fridge Conversion: Figure out how many taps you'll have, drill that many holes in the door. There are no coolant lines that run through the door so it is pretty straight forward. Providing enough length for the lines to reach when the door is fully open is the only concern.

Chest Freezer Conversion: The common option is to build a 2x4 collar and mount taps through the 2x4. The collar can be secured by using a metal bracket that screws into the existing holes from where the lid screwed in, then screwing the lid into the collar. Other options are to place additional pieces of wood on the inside or the outside so the the collar slips in or around the top of the freezer, then screwing the top to the collar. Other more permanent options involve using an adhesive and caulk to mount the collar, or drilling the top and mounting a tower. An external thermostat will need to be used to maintain the temperature and some form of moisture control should be used as well.

Upright Freezer: Really the only reason you'd go this router is because you have a freezer sitting around because it is identical to an upright fridge, but you also have to get a temperature control unit, and moisture control.