**Alcohols – Oxidation of Alcohols**

Alcohols can be oxidised by 3 main methods

1. Combustion



1. Reaction with oxygen in the air



1. Reaction with potassium dichromate and sulfuric acid



**1. Combustion**

When alcohols burn in air they form carbon dioxide and water.

E.g. propanol C3H7OH



**2. Reaction with oxygen in the air**

Alcohols react slowly with oxygen in the air to form a carboxylic acid. This is why wine tastes sour if left open for a few days. The ethanol has oxidised to ethanoic acid (vinegar).



**3. Reaction with potassium dichromate (VI) and sulfuric acid**

Alcohols react with potassium dichromate (VI), K2Cr2­O7 and sulfuric acid, H2SO4 to form carboxylic acids. During the process, the potassium dichromate changes colour from **orange** to **green**.

