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## My beer turns out too hoppy, or not hoppy enough, what can I do to change this?



**Hops** play a big role in how your beer turns out. For those new to brewing, hops are what add bitterness to the beer. The oils extracted from the hops during the boil can add a lot of complexity to your beer.

When a brewer is new to the hobby, hops can be one of the more difficult items to master because there is not a great way to test out what the hops taste like before using them. We find that simply trying different kinds of hops can be the best solution, since individual taste varies.

It isn't a bad idea to make the same recipe a few times, but change the hops in each batch to discover which flavors you like best. A good beer style to practice on is pale ale.

This is a style of beer known for its hoppiness, and provides a good base beer for your experimentation.

If you are finding that your beers are turning out too hoppy for your enjoyment, start by looking at what the alpha acids are for that type of hops. Our hops come labeled with the variety, and then a percentage AA. For Example, Cascade Hops, 5.3% AA. The 5.3% AA is what is going to tell you the bitterness of that variety. The higher the percentage, the more bitterness you can expect from the hops. Mild hops are usually around the 3.5% AA range, where a very bitter hop is around 12% AA.

If you find that the recipe you are using that includes hops with a 12% AA, try one that is around 7% AA on your next batch. Each variety of hops will have a different flavor profile, so sometimes the answer isn't trying a different variety of hop, but adjusting how much you use, and/or how long it is in the boil.

You've got this great pale ale, but you just feel it is a little too much for you American Light Lager drinking friends. No problem! You can still make the same beer, but we can tame it up a little bit with a simple adjustment. You can do one of two things to fix this problem:

1. Don't use as many hops in the boil. If the recipe calls for 1 ounce of bittering hops, cut it down to ½ ounce. The fewer hops that are used, the less bitterness you will get in your beer.
2. Cut down the amount of time that the hops boil for. If the recipe calls for boiling your bittering hops for 30 minutes, cut it down to 15-20 minutes. Less time in the boil translates to less hop utilization. Fewer of these bitter oils will be infused in your beer, resulting in a less hoppy beer.

Do not do both things as you will really reduce the flavor of your beer. Try one or the other first, and then adjust from there if you need to.

If your beers are turning out less hoppy than you like, do the opposite. Either add more hops, or increase the amount of time the hops boil. A word of warning on boiling the hops longer, sometimes the extra time can start to pull out a lot of tannin in the hops. This is a very earthy tone, sometimes very bitter as well, that can upset the flavor of the beer. So, our recommendation would be to add more hops for best results.

Hint: You can also dry hop if you want to add some more hop flavor to your beer. Check out our PDF titled "[What is dry hopping?](#)" for more information.