

## Before Brewing:

**Check Your Yeast – it may need preparation.** Your recipe will include one of the following types of yeast:

**(a) Wyeast Direct-Pitch Activator Liquid Yeast.** Activator yeast can be used as soon as it warms to room temperature, but it's even better if activated before use. We recommend activating when you start brewing so it'll be ready when you need it.

1. Locate and move inner packet to a corner.
2. Place this area in palm of one hand and firmly smack it with your other hand to break the inner packet.
3. Confirm the inner packet is broken. Shake the package well to release the nutrients.
4. Incubate the pack for 3 hours or more at 70-75°F.
5. It's not necessary to see full swelling before use.
6. Shake, open, and pour into aerated wort at 65-75°F.
7. Maintain temperature until fermentation is evident by bubbling airlock or foaming on top of wort.

*Wyeast Activator packages sometimes swell during shipping or later even while properly stored. This does not indicate deterioration; it's just the result of trace remaining nutrients causing culture activity and CO2 production.*

**(b) White Labs Liquid Yeast.** White Labs tubes can be used as soon as they warm to room temperature. Remove the yeast from refrigeration 2 hours before use to allow time for gradual warming.

When it's time to pitch yeast simply remove the protective shrink wrap, shake the vial to re-suspend the yeast, open the cap, and pour into your aerated wort at 70-75°F.

**(c) Fermentis Dry Yeast.** Manufactured with one of the most technologically advanced processes in the industry, these are certainly the best dry yeast cultures available.

Re-hydration is not necessary. When it's time to pitch yeast simply tear open the packet and sprinkle evenly on the surface of your 60-75°F wort without stirring. The Fermentis dry yeast particles are pH buffered and designed to absorb water, sink down, and then disperse all on their own.

## Preparing to boil:

To make a 5 gallon batch of beer you don't need to boil the entire 5 gallons. In fact, home brewers usually boil less without any bad effect on their beer. Later in step 6 we'll tell you how to make sure your boil isn't over-concentrated even if you're using a smaller pot.

For stovetop brewing a 16-24 quart stock pot is ideal. You probably shouldn't try to boil more than 3-4 gallons on your stove since a small strong boil is better than a large weak boil.

With a large pot and a propane cooker you can do a full-volume boil. Depending on equipment (and weather) you may need to start with 6-7 gallons to end with 5 gallons. Don't worry if you boil off too much and need to add water at the end.

## Part 1 – BREWING:                      date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Fill your pot with cold water. Remember to leave room for foaming and for the ingredients you'll be adding. *If your water is chlorinated consider using a faucet filter. Distilled water and Reverse Osmosis water are also fine for brewing with malt extract, which still contains all the original minerals from the water that was used to make it.*

**Step 2:** Pour your steeping grain into the muslin bag and tie the bag closed. The grain will steep like a teabag as the water heats up. Tie the bag's tail to a pot handle so the bag doesn't rest against bottom and get scorched.

**Step 3:** Turn heat to HIGH and leave the pot lid off. *Certain compounds must be allowed to escape with the steam. You should never cover (or even partially cover) a boiling brew pot.*

**Step 4:** Stir the pot or dunk the grain bag occasionally to improve circulation. When the water reaches 170°F remove the grain. You may choose to sparge (rinse) the grain bag with a quart or two of 170°F water but don't squeeze the bag. *There's no need to stop heating and hold at a specific temperature because you're not mashing.*

**Step 5:** Turn off the heat. If you're brewing on an electric stove you should also remove the pot from the burner since electric burners remain hot for a while.

□ **Step 6:** Add your malt extract and stir thoroughly to dissolve. The easiest way to dispense bagged malt extract is to remove the outer bag and cut small slit in the inner bag. Squeeze out all you can and then swish out the last bit with warm water.

**Note:** No matter how much malt extract is in your recipe; don't add more than 1 to 2 pounds per gallon of water currently in the pot! This avoids over-concentrating the boil and improves beer quality. Any leftover malt extract should be kept in a jar or pitcher ready to add later at step 9.

□ **Step 7:** After the malt extract is dissolved return to high heat. Adjust the heat until you have a steady rolling boil. The boil will tend to foam up & boil over at first; keep a small glass of cool water handy. A little cool water instantly stops a boil-over.

□ **Step 8:** When the boil is stable pour in the 1st bag of hops. It's labeled for the beginning of the boil. There's no need to stir. Now begin a 60-minute countdown to the end of boil.

**Note:** Many recipes have more than one bag of hops. Add each at the time indicated on the label. Some recipes have "dry hops" which won't be used today.

□ **Step 9:** If you have an immersion-coil wort chiller, put it into the boil when 10-15 minutes remain. Heat sterilizes the chiller. When the countdown reaches zero turn off heat and remove the pot from the warm burner if you can move it safely. Now it's time to stir in any leftover malt extract from step 6.

□ **Step 10:** **From now on don't let anything non-sanitized touch the wort.** Cool the wort below 80°F as quickly as possible. Rapid cooling prevents off-flavors from building up in the wort. If you don't have a wort chiller, a cooling bath is effective. *Carefully move the covered pot to a sink and surround it with cool water. After 5 minutes drain the warmed water and refill the sink with ice water.*

**Note:** We don't recommend adding ice directly to the wort. Placing the pot in a refrigerator, outside in cold weather (even snow) isn't very effective. Water is best because it has lots of mass to absorb heat.

□ **Step 11:** While the wort is cooling sanitize your fermentor. Follow the instructions on your sanitizer, using the recommended mixing rates and rinsing if necessary. *In a pinch you can use bleach at ½ cup per 2 gallons but it requires a long*

*soak and lots of rinsing. Bleach is a common source of off-flavors - real brewing sanitizers are much better. Avoid other household disinfectants and "antibacterial" products.*

□ **Step 12:** Once the wort has cooled below 80°F pour it into your fermentor. For carboys you'll need a siphon or funnel. *You'll find sediment (trub) at the bottom of your brew pot. You can stop pouring when you reach the trub, but if some or all of the trub gets into your fermentor it won't harm the beer. Don't try to filter or strain the trub unless you have specific gear for it.*

□ **Step 13:** If necessary, add water to bring the batch up to full volume. Using chilled water helps with cooling. Ideally you'd use pre-boiled chilled water, but in reality most water is clean enough to use without bothering. We recommend bringing it up a bit above 5 gallons since you'll eventually lose a few quarts when siphoning. Our recipes are designed to finish with 5 gallons of beer so don't worry that you're watering it down!

**Note:** In a 6½ gallon glass carboy we fill to 12½" above the floor. We recommend against using a 5 gallon carboy with blow-off tube because you'll be blowing out healthy yeast and weakening the fermentation.

□ **Step 14:** After cooling it's important to aerate or oxygenate the wort. Stir vigorously with a spoon or paddle. This can be tricky in a carboy. Fortunately several tools are available like drill-mixers and oxygen or air bubbler systems for home brewers. More oxygen makes a larger, healthier yeast population which results in faster, cleaner fermentation.

**Note:** Mixing also blends any added water with the wort. Without vigorous stirring water and wort tend to separate into layers which mess up the next step.

□ **Step 15: Optional but recommended.** Use your hydrometer to test the Specific Gravity (SG) of the wort. Pull out a sample in a test jar or thief, ensure that the hydrometer is floating freely, and spin the hydrometer if bubbles are clinging to it. When it settles down look to the point where the SG scale lines up with the surface. That's your beer's Original Gravity (OG).

**Note:** Don't obsess over your OG reading. It's easy to get a bad hydrometer reading especially in poorly stirred wort. OG is a result of how much malt extract went in so it's unlikely that there's actually a problem.

Write down your OG: \_\_\_\_\_

□ **Step 16:** Open yeast and pitch (pour it in). The procedures for different yeasts are on the page 1 of these instructions.

□ **Step 17:** Fill your airlock halfway with water and put the top back on it. If you're fermenting in a bucket, install the airlock in the bucket lid before putting the lid on the bucket. If you're fermenting in a carboy, insert the airlock into the stopper before securing the stopper in the carboy.

□ **Step 18:** You should see signs of fermentation within 24-72 hours. Fermentation produces lots of yeast foam and lots of CO<sub>2</sub> gas, which pushes through the airlock making bubbles. *The "lag time" before visible fermentation is a major cause of unnecessary worry. Some yeast strains are naturally faster than others and that's not a problem. Cooler temperatures will slow down the fermentation and that's not always bad. Dissolved oxygen also has a big influence - if you want shorter lag time consider using oxygen when pitching yeast.*

**Note:** Bucket lids (even new ones) commonly leak. The leak will be too tiny to see or feel and won't harm your beer. But a leak does mean you might not see any action in the airlock. If your airlock isn't bubbling after 2 days, open the lid and take a look! If you see foam on top then everything is fine. If you want to be absolutely sure check your Specific Gravity again. If it's lower than the OG then you have fermentation!

□ **Step 19:** Shield your fermentor from UV sources like sunlight or fluorescent light. Most ale yeasts ferment best at 65-75°F. Most lager yeasts ferment best at 50-65°F, but some lagers tolerate warmer temperatures quite well. Wheat beer yeasts like ale temperatures or a little warmer. To find your yeast's ideal temperature range, look up the specific yeast on our website. Keep the fermentor at a steady temperature. In a basement, a fermentor will be coolest sitting directly on the floor and several degrees warmer on a table.

**Note:** If your home is too cool, electric fermentor heaters are available. If your home is too warm, the ideal solution is to find a cheap or used refrigerator and outfit it with an override thermostat.

□ **Step 20:** Fermentation usually takes 5 to 10 days but may be much faster or slower. The only truth is that fermentation will be finished when it's finished! We can't predict how many days it will take because every brewer has different conditions. Experience will teach you what to expect. Fermentation is

usually complete when you don't see any more activity. In rare cases fermentation can stop prematurely - usually due to poor aeration or too-low fermentation temperature.

**Note:** The only way to be sure is to take another Specific Gravity reading with your hydrometer. The SG always drops during fermentation. If you ignore the "1" before the decimal point, the SG should drop about 70-75% from the original reading. Example: A beer that started at 1.048 should finish at about 1.013. If you find that you have incomplete fermentation, move the fermentor to a warmer area, wait a day, and then stir it briskly to reinvigorate the yeast.

**Note:** Beer that has finished fermentation shows no activity. No activity means no activity. If you're still getting bubbles don't drive yourself crazy timing them because airlock bubbles aren't uniformly sized so "bubble interval" isn't very useful data. Keep waiting for the fermentation to finish.

**Note:** Just to confuse things a little, a finished fermentation can release CO<sub>2</sub> and cause bubbles. If your fermentor warms up, or if it's disturbed in any way you may see "false" signs of fermentation.

## Optional – SECONDARY FERMENTATION

Most beers can benefit from secondary fermentation but it's seldom absolutely necessary. The term "secondary fermentor" is misleading because most actual fermentation happens in the first (primary) fermentor. It's better to think of a secondary fermentor as an aging and clarifying tank.

For several reasons, a 5 gallon carboy is the best choice for a secondary fermentor:

**First,** you want exactly 5 gallons of volume – no more. Any headspace contains air, and the oxygen in that air degrades the beer. Although oxygen is necessary before fermentation it should be avoided after fermentation. This wasn't a concern in the primary fermentor because so much CO<sub>2</sub> is produced that it blows out the air from the headspace. But now that your beer is in secondary there's little or no CO<sub>2</sub> production and you can't count on air being driven out before it does damage.

**Second**, you shouldn't use a bucket. Bucket lids are seldom perfect so buckets breathe a little. During primary fermentation this isn't a problem because so much CO<sub>2</sub> is being produced. But in secondary even a small leak is significant.

**Third**, a carboy shows what's happening inside. You can observe settling and clarifying at a glance. There's no need to repeatedly open the fermentor and expose the beer to air.

Using a secondary fermentor is easy. Wait until fermentation is complete or nearly complete, and then gently siphon the beer from primary to secondary. Leave as much of the sediment behind as possible. Fill the carboy to the neck, topping up with pre-boiled water if necessary. Don't worry about watering it down - you're supposed to have 5 gallons! Let the secondary fermentor sit until the beer clears. Even clear beer still has enough invisible suspended yeast cells for carbonation.

**Note:** If beer sits longer than 2-3 weeks in secondary the few remaining yeast cells will be quite dormant. The same is true of lagers that have been stored in a cold secondary. If you desire rapid carbonation in these cases, add a fresh yeast culture when you bottle.

## Optional – CLARIFICATION

You can help your beer clear more quickly, and also reduce the chill haze which forms later. You don't even need a secondary fermentor to do this! The best method is a 3-part approach:

**First**, add Irish moss or a Whirlfloc tablet to the last 15 minutes of your boil. There is no downside to using these products. Irish moss causes more protein to out of the wort, reducing one of the main causes of haziness in the finished beer.

**Second**, add *finings* after fermentation is complete. Finings include Isinglass, SuperKleer, and Chitosan. They make particles stick together and settle more effectively. Just add finings to your primary or secondary after all fermentation is complete. Follow the recommended dosage on your finings. Stirring makes finings work! Stirring up the settled yeast seems like a bad idea but you actually need to get everything moving. Everything will clump together and settle again in a day or two, even clearer than before.

**Third**, PVPP clarifiers like Polyclar or Divergan can be added along with the finings. These don't dissolve. They just settle to the bottom while absorbing tannins which are a major source of chill haze and permanent haze. Stirring is necessary because PVPP must be completely dispersed for maximum effectiveness.

## Part 2 – BOTTLING: date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Which Bottles?** Amber glass bottles with pry-off caps or flip-tops are best. You can't reliably cap twist-off bottles. Longneck bottles like Samuel Adams are ideal. Clear bottles like Corona are fine if you protect them from ultraviolet light. Some British & Canadian bottles like Bass & Molson are tricky for hand cappers due to their design. Bench cappers work best for these.

**How Many Bottles?** You'll need approximately:

- (53) 12oz/375ml bottles
- (39) 16oz/500ml bottles
- (29) 22oz/650ml bottles
- (19) 32oz/1 liter bottles

**Home Brew on draft!** Many brewers keg their beer. Although it requires more equipment, kegging is actually faster and easier. Keg systems generally require a dedicated refrigerator. There are also mini-systems like Party-Pigs which are popular for being small enough to fit in your current refrigerator.

**Step 1:** Confirm that fermentation is complete. This is easy to observe in a carboy but buckets can be trickier. Don't rely on watching the airlock since lids often leak. Remove the lid and look for a clear surface and tell-tale ring of crud showing where yeasty foam used to be. Disturbing the fermentor may make bubbles rise but this doesn't indicate renewed fermentation.

**Step 2: Optional but recommended.** Test the Specific Gravity (SG) of the wort. Ensure that your hydrometer is floating freely and spin to dislodge bubbles. This is your beer's Finishing Gravity (FG).

**Note:** SG drops during fermentation. Ignoring the "1" before the decimal point, the SG should drop about 70-75% from OG to FG. Example: A beer with OG 1.048 should end at about FG 1.013. If your fermentation isn't complete don't bottle it yet.

Write down your FG: \_\_\_\_\_

□ **Step 3:** Clean any visible soil from your bottles or equipment with a brewing cleanser. Now mix up a few gallons of sanitizing solution in your bottling bucket. Run a little into each bottle, swirl, and return solution to the bucket. *Many gadgets are available to speed cleaning, sterilizing, and draining bottles.*

**Note:** If your fermentor is set up to fill bottles without a bottling bucket, use another container to sanitize the items in steps 3, 4, 5 and then skip to step 12.

□ **Step 4:** Allow bottles to drain upside down. If you don't have a bottle drying tree you can use a dishwasher top rack. Don't actually use the dishwasher to sanitize bottles. Bottle caps are usually clean but you may sanitize them, just don't boil caps!

□ **Step 5:** Sanitize your racking tube, siphon hose, bottle filler, a big stirring paddle, a small spoon, and a glass measuring cup.

□ **Step 6:** Empty the sanitizer from your bottling bucket. Rotate the spigot to point upwards and attach the bottle filler. Use a 1" piece of siphon hose to splice the filler and spigot. Lift the fermentor onto a counter or table and place the bottling bucket on the floor beneath it.

□ **Step 7:** Siphon the beer from fermentor to bottling bucket. *If siphoning seems like a hassle you may want an auto-siphon.*

□ **Step 8:** You can usually let the racking tube rest on the bottom of the fermentor since the tip prevents most sediment pickup. Just don't let it move around and stir up the sediment.

□ **Step 9:** Transfer as gently as possible to reduce oxygen pickup. Thrifty brewers may want to tip the fermentor to siphon out every last bit of beer, especially in a secondary fermentor where there's less sediment. Just don't fret over every ounce of beer – we all leave a little behind.

□ **Step 10:** When siphoning is complete, lift the bottling bucket to a counter or table with the spigot hanging just over the edge. You can drape a clean cloth over the top. Rotate the spigot to point downward and put something below to catch drips.

□ **Step 11:** Boil a cup of water in your sterile measuring cup (microwaving is fine) and dissolve your bottling sugar into it. Pour the sugar solution into the beer and stir gently to evenly disperse it. Some people like to just siphon onto the sugar, but we find this trick doesn't reliably mix it evenly.

□ **Step 12:** Turn the bottling spigot on. Beer will flow into the bottle filler and stop at the tip valve. Now when you bring a bottle up onto the filler, the bottom of the bottle pushes the valve and makes beer flow. Fill your bottles to the very top since withdrawing from the filler drops the level about an inch.

**Note:** If you're bottling straight from a fermentor you probably haven't yet added any bottling sugar. You need to add a little bit of sugar to each individual bottle. This is easiest with Conditioning Tablets made for this task, or you can add a scant teaspoon of normal bottling sugar to each bottle.

□ **Step 13:** Cap your bottle and repeat until you're done!

**CONDITIONING:** Store bottles at fermentation temperature for at least 1-2 weeks. Yeast cells will ferment the bottling sugar, producing more CO<sub>2</sub> which is the source of carbonation! Some beers naturally take longer to carbonate so verify that yours is carbonated before moving too many bottles into refrigeration.

**STORAGE:** After the beer has conditioned (carbonated) it's okay (but not required) to move bottles to cooler storage. Steady cool storage keeps beer fresh longer. Most beers store well at room or basement temperature. Lagers can be stored at cooler temperatures.

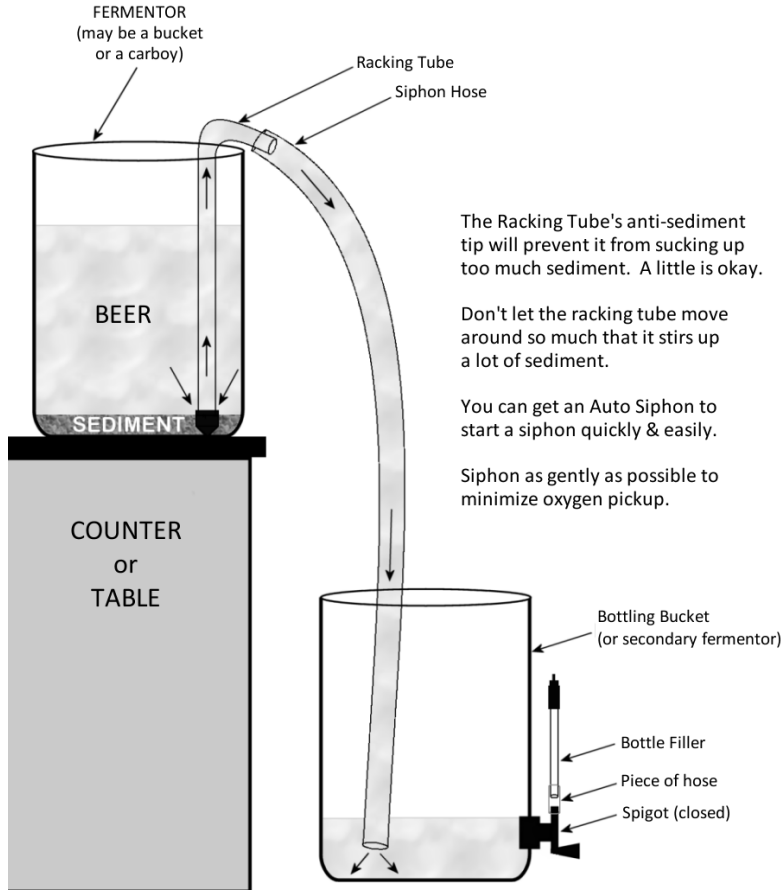
**MATURING:** Almost all beer will improve with age. Most show the best improvement after 4 to 8 weeks. Storage conditions have a big influence, also the strength of the beer. Strong beer ages more slowly and light beer peaks more quickly.

**SHELF LIFE:** Storage conditions influence shelf life. Store beer at a steady temperature away from ultraviolet light. Alcohol & hops are preservatives so high-alcohol, high-hop beers last longer. Even the lightest beers should be good for 4+ months.

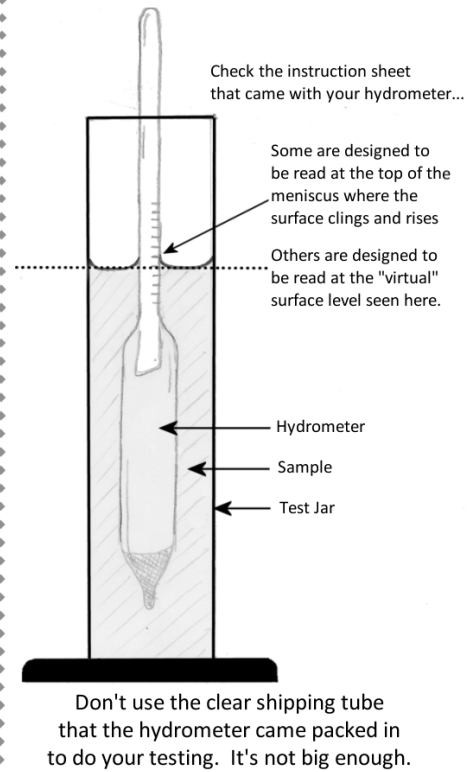
**SEDIMENT AND CLARITY:** Naturally carbonated beer always has some bottle sediment. It's an inevitable product of bottle conditioning. The sediment is full of B vitamins and perfectly healthy to drink. Even crystal-clear beer forms haze when chilled which is why beer commercials talk about cold-filtering! Chill haze is flavorless and will settle out with extended refrigeration. To serve crystal clear beer, refrigerate bottles upright and uncap gently to avoid raising the sediment. Pour into a clean glass in one smooth motion and stop pouring when you reach the sediment.



## Siphoning



## Hydrometer Reading



## Bottle Filling

