

BREWING BASICS



An overview of the craft of brewing at home.

This describes how easy it is to make really good beer & tells you what you need to make it.

All products mentioned in this brochure are available from Westbrew Distributors. (See page 2 for details)



We give you a **MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE** on selected brands.

Ask for these brands by name.

BREWING THE EASY WAY

Beer is quite a simple beverage. It is made from malt, hops, yeast & water. The malt provides "brewing sugars" which are absorbed by the yeast & turned into alcohol. The malt also provides the basic colour & flavour of the beer plus some aroma. The hops make the beer bitter & add some additional flavour & aroma.

One of the most important ingredients is the yeast. Not only does it convert brewing sugars into alcohol, it also has a great effect on flavour. Beer made with inferior yeast tastes very ordinary. Beer made with high quality yeast tastes terrific. Cheap beer ingredient kits do not usually come with high quality yeast.

There are several ways to make beer but the easiest, & the best way to learn about brewing is to use a BEER INGREDIENT KIT (I'll call it a "beer kit" from now on). This is the brewer's equivalent of a packet of cake-mix. The ingredients are prepared & ready to go. It's easy to make beer this way but it still teaches you the basics & with the right ingredients, you will make extremely good beer.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

As well as the ingredient kit, you will need some equipment. This will include:

FERMENTER This is the container that you use to make the beer in. This is where the brewing sugars ferment into alcohol. It is usually made of food grade plastic & holds 30 litres.

Attached to the fermenter is an **AIRLOCK** that lets the fermentation gas escape but stops contamination getting into your brew.

There is also a **THERMOMETER** attached to the side wall so you can keep an eye on the temperature inside (this is important).

It also has a **TAP** at the bottom which connects to a **BOTTLING TUBE & VALVE** to make it easy to bottle your beer.

The book "**HOME BREWING**" is written in Australia for Australians & is designed specifically for people new to brewing. You will find it really easy to read & a great help.

You will need to test the beer to see if it is ready to bottle or to work out the alcohol content. A **HYDROMETER** is used for this.

When you bottle your beer, you put some ordinary sugar in each bottle. This is called "priming" & you use a **PRIMING SCOOP** to do it.

You will also need **STERILIZER** to kill any germs & bugs on your equipment & bottles, **CROWN CAPS** to seal your bottles & a **CAPPING TOOL** to close the caps on the bottles.

USEFUL EXTRAS

There are other items that will make brewing easier for you.

Bottle washing & sterilizing is a frequent task & a **BOTTLE BRUSH** is always useful. Sterilizing takes a while if you do it by hand but a **BOTTLE RINSER** turns this into a quick & easy job.

A long **PLASTIC SPOON** or **PADDLE** is very useful for mixing your ingredients before you make your beer.

Regular beer ingredient kits are supplied with yeast (under the lid) that needs to be kept above 18°C to work. If you put your fermenter in a cold place, a **BREW HEATER** will solve this problem.

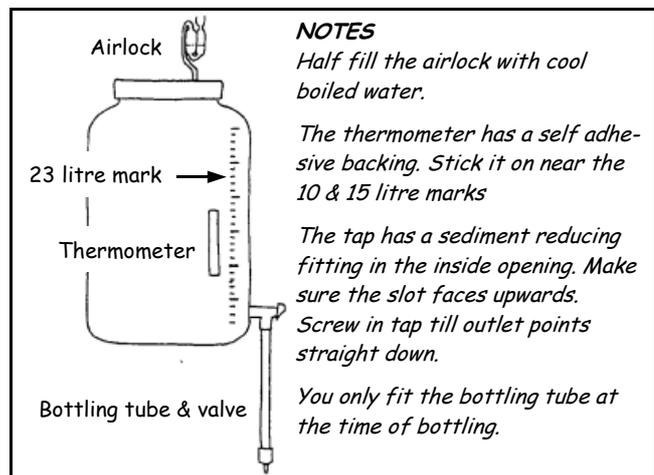
The simple cappers often used by brewers require the use of a mallet or hammer to seal the bottle. This can result in breakage & they only work on the old style non twist top type bottles.. A **MECHANICAL BOTTLE CAPPER** makes this job safe, quick & easy & it will work on both regular & twist-top bottles of any size.

BEGINNER'S BREWERIES

You can buy all these things separately or you can buy a **BREWCRAFT BEGINNERS BREWERY KIT**. Your supplier will have a range of kits with different components to suit your needs & budget.

When you choose a **BREWCRAFT BEGINNERS KIT**, you get everything you need to make really good beer & it is very much cheaper than buying the components separately. Ask your supplier for details.

Here's how you assemble your fermenter



MAKING BEER FROM KITS

Once you have your brewery, you are ready to make your first batch. You will need some ingredients & as I said at the start, a beer kit is the easiest. However, please don't assume that because it is an easy way to make beer, it will not be good.

You can buy ordinary beer kits in many places including supermarkets. These usually make an OK beer. However, the range available is generally limited to a few basic beer styles & you cannot get any advice or help from a supermarket.

The terrific thing about specialty homebrew shops is that you can ask questions & the best of them will also give you a money-back satisfaction guarantee.

Specialist brewing suppliers carry a much wider range of genuinely high quality beer kits from specialist manufacturers. We recommend the following quality brands.

BEERMAKERS PREMIUM AUSTRALIAN is excellent for Australian styles.

For imported styles, you can't go past the superb **MUNTONS** and **BEERMAKERS PREMIUM IMPORTED** brands from England and **BLACK ROCK** from New Zealand.

Instructions provided with each brand vary a lot, however all kits can be made in several different ways. The instructions below are easy and reliable & can be used for any brand of beer kit.

WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU USE THESE INSTRUCTIONS INSTEAD OF THOSE SUPPLIED BY THE BEER KIT MANUFACTURER. If you do this, you will not have to worry about the fact that one brand tells you to do it one way & another brand tells you to do it another way. You will be able to make all brands YOUR way.

STAGE 1 - PREPARATION

- 1 Clean & sterilize your equipment. Your kit has instructions for sterilizing. Be sure to rinse with cool boiled water after sterilizing.
- 2 Put your equipment together as shown here.
- 3 Put the yeast aside for the fermentation stage.
- 4 Dissolve contents of the can in 2 to 4 litres of very hot water (less in hot weather, more in cold) in a sterilized bucket.

Hint: The contents of the can are much easier to handle if you put the can in very hot water for about 20 min before opening.

- 5 Add 1kg of glucose or dextrose and stir to dissolve. **DO NOT USE SUGAR**

Hint: You can use a variety of additives at this stage that will greatly improve your beers. Have a look at the "MAKING BETTER BEERS" section on the back panel.

- 6 Add about 10 litres of cold water to your fermenter, transfer the hot mixture from the bucket to your fermenter & mix well.
- 5 Top up with cold water to the 23 litre mark.

STAGE 2 - FERMENTATION

- 1 Sprinkle the yeast onto the surface.

Hint: The temperature in the fermenter must not be more than 30 deg.C when you add the yeast.

- 2 Seal the fermenter, and half fill the airlock with cool boiled water.
- 3 Allow the brew to ferment. Try to keep the temperature in the fermenter reasonably constant in the low 20's and try to avoid it falling below about 18 deg.C.
- 4 Fermentation is finished when the airlock stops bubbling and the brew itself begins to clear. Allow a further 48 hours for it to clear thoroughly.

Hint: If you are using a hydrometer, the final reading for most good beer kits will be about 1005 to 1008. A few high quality beer packs, particularly those that are made to a volume less than 22.5 litres, will finish with higher final gravity readings. Additional adjuncts like malt & corn syrup may also make a beer finish with higher final gravity readings. THIS IS NORMAL.

STAGE 3 - BOTTLING

- 1 Sterilize the bottles & rinse with cool boiled water.
- 2 Add a small amount of sugar to each bottle. You will need 6g for 750ml bottles, 4g for 500ml bottles and 3g for stubbies. Your priming scoop is useful for this job.
- 3 Fill each bottle to within 50mm of the top.
- 4 Close each bottle with a crown cap and seal it firmly.
- 5 Shake thoroughly then stand the bottles in a warm spot (say around 20 to 22 deg.C.) for about a week then store for at least another 2 weeks before sampling.

Hint: Always store beer in the dark

STAGE 4 - MATURATION

Homebrew improves greatly with bottle aging and will not go off in the bottle at all. A six month old beer will taste very much better than a one month old beer. So, try to age your beers, you will enjoy them much more. In fact, you will be amazed at how much your aged beers have improved.

Don't forget to label and date each batch. Keep samples to try at 3, 6 and 12 months old. Take notes about how they taste then you will see for yourself how this amazing improvement works. Most importantly, write down the recipe you used. There's nothing worse than finding a well aged beer in the cupboard that is simply superb & not knowing how you made it.

QUALITY INGREDIENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The quality of the ingredients you use will make all the difference between your beers being really good or just ordinary. Use reputable brand beer packs & avoid the "el cheapo" brands. You get what you pay for in homebrew & if you spend the minimum, you should expect to make low grade beers.

Try to think of it this way. Every time you make a batch of beer, you are saving about \$60. Suppose you spend \$10 more on your ingredients. You are still saving \$50. You are making better beer now for very little extra cost & you are still saving heaps.

BREWCRAFT, BEERMAKERS, MUNTONS & BLACK ROCK are all excellent brands. Ask for these products by name & you will be ensuring that your beers are always great to drink.

MAKING BETTER BEERS

Sugar is cheap but does not make good beer. Glucose or dextrose make better tasting beers so use it instead of sugar. Or... you can use malt & corn syrup instead of these to make really superior beers. Details are in our blue "Great Beers" brochure. Please ask for a copy.

After you've made some regular beers, you might like to try a beer like a Boags Premium or a Grolsch or a Guinness, you will find recipes for these & many others in our yellow "Easy Recipes" brochure. Ask for a copy of that one too.

PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

All products mentioned in this brochure are available from **WESTBREW**. We have a store & a **MAIL ORDER** service. You can order by phone or on our web site. See below for all details.

HELP & ADVICE

If you would like some advice or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us. We all have expert advisers on the team and you can be sure we will give you good answers that are practical and not loaded with "bull".

Our internet web site is full of helpful information & recipes for making tremendous beers. There is also a comprehensive on-line shop for each state.

If you have any problems getting supplies, contact us for advice about the nearest good supplier or to take advantage of our mail order service. Have a look on the web site or call for details.

WESTBREW DISTRIBUTORS

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