

BREW A PERFECT CUP AT HOME

There is an art to brewing a good cup of coffee. Choosing the proper equipment and ingredients is easy. The method, however, can be complex. This guide, created by Kopplin's owner Andrew Kopplin, will help you master the art of brewing the perfect cup.



EQUIPMENT

INSULATED STEEPING VESSEL

To do the brew method properly, you will need to have something to steep the coffee in that insulates so the brew temperature doesn't drop too far. I like double wall things for insulation, however, a towel or tea cozy could accomplish the heat retention as well. It's important to look for quality materials:

Glass	Recommended	Does not absorb odor and taste
Stainless Steel	Acceptable	Absorbs some odor and taste
Plastic	Not recommended	Absorbs odor, taste and toxins

GRINDER

Grinding fresh is the single most important factor in brewing good coffee. Cheap grinders make for an uneven grind, resulting in astringent and bitter notes along with sour and grassy ones—not exactly a “Yum” experience.

Manual Burr	Recommended	Great grind, affordably priced
Electrical Burr	Recommended	Expensive, but worth it (\$150+)
Blade	Not recommended	Extremely uneven, choppy grind

FILTERING MECHANISM

After steeping the coffee you'll need a way of filtering the grounds out. Really anything will do for this. At the shop we've investigated the quickest ways of filtering for our purposes; however, any filter you have for coffee could work. Keep in mind it's always important to rinse any filter to eliminate off-flavors.

CUP

Don't go to the trouble of making great coffee only to pour it into a crappy cup (or worse, disposable). Porcelain or glass are best for enjoying a coffee's flavor, and the moment.

INGREDIENTS

COFFEE

Coffee should be sweet with complex acidity. If your coffee needs massive amounts of cream and sugar to be “perfect,” you may want to use different beans.

The flavor of coffee is determined by how it is roasted. Bitter, ashy flavors occur when beans have been over-roasted, a method often used to cover up off-flavors.

A well-grown, properly cared for bean can support a lighter roast, drawing out its innate flavors. When a skilled roaster finds a bean of such pedigree, the results are magical.

WATER

A brewed cup of coffee is over 98% water. If the water tastes bad so will the coffee. Carbon filtered tap water (Brita or PUR) should work fine. Excessively softened water will not extract flavor as well as harder water that has minerals that aid the process.

PRESS POT METHOD

INGREDIENTS

Coffee beans, filtered water

EQUIPMENT

Clean steeping vessel and filter mechanism, grinder, water kettle, timer, spoon, measuring cup or scale.

MEASUREMENT

14-16 grams of coffee for every 8 fl oz is a good rule of thumb, however, note that the coffee dose will depend on brewing amount and grind coarseness.

You can use a pre-heated measuring cup to measure the water, but my favorite method is to measure by weight. Pour the freshly ground coffee into the press pot, place it on the scale and zero it out. (Key: 1 ml of water weighs 1 gram.)

METHOD

- 1.) Start heating the water while you grind the coffee beans. A good starting point for coarseness of grind is that it should feel like salt crystals when rubbed between your fingers.
- 2.) Pour a little boiling water into the steeping vessel to heat it. Coffee is very sensitive, and temperature shocks bring out bitter flavors. Dump the heating water out and add the ground coffee to the press pot. Slowly pour the hot water (which should have cooled to about 200°) so all grounds are wetted and clump-free and stir gently. Start timer for 3 minutes (a good starting time for the grind we discussed earlier).
- 3.) At 3 minutes, decant your coffee through the filtering mechanism. Wait for the coffee to filter.
- 4.) Enjoy!!!

TESTING

The best way to tell if you brewed your coffee right is simply by tasting it. Learning how to tweak your brew is the best way to find your way to the perfect cup of coffee.

Note: Most actions have more than one effect when adjusting the brew. For example, if the coffee tastes weak, you'll need to increase coffee dosage and use a finer grind to account for the slower extraction of using more coffee.

ACTION	WHAT IT DOES	WHEN TO DO IT
Coarsen Grind	Creates slower extraction (less surface area)	Taste: bitter, ashy, astringent Strength & Body: good
Finer Grind	Creates quicker extraction (more surface area)	Taste: sour, grassy, undeveloped Strength & Body: good
Increase Coffee Dosage	Increases brew strength Creates slower extraction	Taste: bitter, ashy, astringent Strength: weak
Decrease Coffee Dosage	Decreases brew strength Creates quicker extraction	Taste: sour, grassy, undeveloped Strength: overpowering
Longer Steep	Increases extraction amount Pulls out different flavors	Taste: sour, grassy, undeveloped Body: weak
Shorter Steep	Decreases extraction amount Allows bright, acidic notes to emerge	Taste: bitter, ashy, astringent, Body: overwhelming, covers acidity

ABOUT KOPPLIN'S

Kopplin's creates brilliant coffees, tasty teas, and delicious hot chocolate.

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