

## Basic Brewing Instructions for Beginner's Kits

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The following is a brief overview of the brewing process. We recommend reading the first chapters of *The New Complete Joy of Homebrewing* or *How to Brew*. Their instructions are slightly different, but the basic ideas are the same.

The brewing process is fairly forgiving except in one vital regard: **sanitation**. Sanitizing your equipment is a critical, but not difficult, step in brewing. Essentially, you want to sanitize anything that touches your beer after the boiling step - fermenters, hydrometers, thermometers, siphon tubing, bottling bucket, bottles, etc.

1. Begin by putting 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 gallons of water in a large stockpot. Turn the heat on the stove to begin heating the water. Add your malt extract (usually 5 to 7 pounds of liquid or dry malt extract.) Be sure to stir well as you add the malt so that it does not burn on the bottom of your kettle.
2. Bring this mixture, now called wort, to a boil. Be careful. When it first begins to boil, the wort will rise rapidly in your pot. If you are not careful, it will overflow, creating a sticky mess on your stove and discord in your household. Be prepared to pull the pot off the burner temporarily if necessary.
3. If you are using a hopped extract, you should boil the "wort" (as the mixture is now called) for 15 - 20 minutes.
4. After the boil is through, it is time to put your wort into your fermenter. If possible, try to cool your wort in the kettle before pouring into the fermenter. To do this, try covering your kettle and placing it in an ice and water bath. Do not put ice cubes into the wort. Freezers and refrigerators are notoriously "germy" places.
5. If you are using a plastic fermenter, you may pour the wort directly into it (even if you have not previously cooled the wort). Then top it up to the five gallon mark with cold water. If you are using a glass fermenter, you will need to be careful not to pour hot wort directly into the fermenter. It will break!!! If you cannot cool the wort, then you should put a couple of gallons of cold water into the fermenter first, then pour the hot wort into that cold water.
6. After filling the fermenter, seal it with your airlock and closed lid. Fill the airlock halfway with water, then place it in the grommetted hole of the lid of the bucket fermenter, or the drilled stopper of the glass carboy.
7. When the wort has cooled to 70-75 - degrees F., you may add the yeast. Remove the lid or stopper, add the yeast, then replace the lid or stopper. Within 24-48 hours, you should notice a stream of bubbles flowing through the airlock. This is the carbon dioxide produced in the fermentation process.
8. If you have a secondary fermenter, you should "rack" (siphon) the liquid from the primary fermenter to the secondary when the fermentation activity has slowed to a bubble per minute or so (approx one week.) For siphoning, use the j-shaped racking cane and the flexible tubing. Let sit in the secondary for another week or two. If you do not have a secondary fermenter, bottle when fermentation has stopped (bubbles every five minutes or less), but you should not leave your beer in the primary fermenter for more than 2 weeks, if possible.
9. When ready to bottle, siphon using your j-shaped racking cane and the flexible tubing from your fermenter into the bottling bucket. Mix in 3/4 cup of dextrose and stir well to evenly distribute the dextrose throughout the beer. (Dissolve this dextrose in a pint of water and boil for five minutes first.) Connect your flexible tubing to the spigot in your bottling bucket. Attach your spring-loaded bottle filler to the other end of that flexible tubing and fill your clean, sanitized bottles.
10. Attach bottle caps using the bottle capper.
11. Wait patiently for about two weeks. Then place a beer in the fridge until cool. Pop the top, pour all but the last 1/4 inch or so into a glass. Look at it, smell it, drink it, and smile at it. It's all yours!!!