

Lager Brewing Tips



Yeast Handling

First, make sure to select an appropriate yeast strain for the style that you wish to brew. Then, **make a starter**. The starter should be at least a quart and pitched while the yeast is active.

Cold Fermentation

To get the appropriate flavor profile, a lager yeast should be used with the fermentation temperature set in that yeast's range – usually between 45 to 52 F. The primary fermentation may require a 10-14 days rather than the 3 or 4 days in an ale. The beer should then be racked into a **secondary** fermenter to get it off the decaying yeast. The secondary fermentation may be carried out at the same temperature as the primary. Allocate at least one, maybe two weeks for this stage.

Lagering

After the secondary is done, it's time to lager the beer. At this stage, the temperature is lowered to the low 30's (F). The beer sits at this temperature for at least two weeks, but 4-6 weeks is preferable. Lagering provides a smoother beer as the malt flavor attains a more rounded character.

Carbonating

If you are bottling, you should prime the beer at the end of the secondary and let the bottles sit at fermentation temperatures for a couple of weeks to allow the carbonation to develop. Then put the bottles into the lagering refrigerator. If you are using kegs, lagering and carbonating can easily be done in the keg itself.