

# How to make the best coffee at home?

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Buying the freshest coffee possible is the best start. There are many misconceptions about when coffee is at its flavour peak; coffee is best from 2 hours to 4 days after roasting. The flavour should still be OK for 10 to 14 days if stored right, but after that it's history. It's best to buy small quantities regularly to keep it fresh.

Storage: oxygen is the bane of all coffee; coffee must be kept in a dry air-tight container in a cool dark place. Never store your coffee in the fridge, as it will absorb the flavours and smells, and who wants a drink that tastes like the contents of a fridge? Freezing coffee is also not recommended.

Grinding: obtaining the right grind for your method of coffee making is crucial. A good grinder is probably the best coffee investment you can make – conical burr grinders are the best. Never grind more coffee than you will use for immediate brewing; once the beans are ground, the flavourful oils are exposed to oxygen and as they dry up, the flavour of the coffee goes with them. Once ground, coffee begins to lose its flavour almost immediately.

Cleaning your coffee making equipment is very important – buy some coffee salts (preferably organic) and use them weekly.



## Using a Filter

- Grind the coffee to a sugar-like consistency
- Wet the coffee with a small amount of hot water (just under boiling point)
- Wait one minute and gently pour in the rest of the water
- It should take 4 to 6 minutes for all of the water to drain through the coffee
- If it takes less than 4 minutes, you need to make the grind more fine; if it takes more than 6 minutes, the grind needs to be more coarse
- Unbleached brown filter papers are preferable to bleached white ones. Permanent wire mesh filters also work very well and are environmentally friendly

## Stove-top Espresso

- Use a moderately fine grind
- Mound the coffee ground high in the filter basket before screwing the two pot pieces together
- Wipe the rim of the pot to remove any stray grounds
- When the top half of the pot is screwed on, the grounds will be compacted by the filter screen
- If the grind is right, you should end up with a dry, tight ‘puck’ of coffee grounds
- Remember you are making a shot of coffee (about 30mL) to then hot milk or water to
- Try using a coffee plunger to make the hot milk frothy

## Home Espresso Machine

- Use an extremely fine, almost flour-like, grind
- Remember you are making a shot of coffee (about 30ml), this is the basis of all types of coffee. To this you will add hot water and/or hot milk
- After the proper dose and tamp (14kg pressure), a shot of espresso should be extracted in approximately 20 to 25 seconds
- If the shot takes less than 20 seconds, you need to make the grind finer; if it takes more than 25 seconds the grind needs to be more coarse
- Heat milk using the hot air pump in the machine in a stainless steel jug by keeping the tip just below the surface of the milk and waiting until the milk has doubled in volume.



### Plunger

- The coffee should be ground coarse. If your grind is too fine you will over-extract your coffee and make it bitter.
- It is better to make a shot of coffee for each person and add water/milk after, rather than make a whole cup using the plunger (i.e. use more coffee in the plunger with less water)
- Warm the plunger before use
- Add about 1 heaped tablespoon (or more/less according to your tastes) of coffee per person
- Add hot – not boiling – water
- Leave for 6 minutes wrapped in a tea-towel
- Gently plunge; if the grind is too fine it will be very hard to push the plunger down
- Finish by adding hot milk or water to each shot in each cup