



Hops were originally used in beer as a preservative. It was not long before it was considered an essential ingredient imparting bitterness & flavour as well as aroma providing a balance for malty sweetness.

Hops are flowers (or cones) that are grown on a grape like vine. The flowers are dried and compressed into pellets, which prolong their shelf life and make them easier to use. There are many different varieties of hops which all impart their own characteristic and produce a wide variety of different styles of beer.

As most of the beer kits available are already bittered, it is the flavour & aroma characteristics we are trying to enhance when using hops in our brew. Below are three different methods you can adopt which all will give slight flavour differences.

Infusion Method: Place hops in a sterilised vessel (a coffee mug will do!) and fill with boiling water. Allow to steep for approximately 10 to 20 minutes to release the flavour while you prepare the rest of your brew.

Tip the contents of the mug into the fermenter just before you add the yeast & give a gentle stir with a sterilised spoon. Add the yeast!.....Easy!!

Dry Hop: Add hops to the fermenter after you have dissolved your other ingredients in hot water. Give a gentle stir to ensure hops are soaked thoroughly, then fill to required level with cold water. Add the yeast!.....Simple!!

Quick Boil: In a saucepan, dissolve your brewing sugar in approximately 2 litres of water & bring it to a gentle simmer. Toss in the hops & simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. If you intend to use other hops by the standard method, you may use this liquid & saucepan instead of a coffee mug (ie. at the end of the simmer, remove saucepan from heat, toss in other hops & steep for 10 to 20 minutes as normal). Using this liquid should reduce the need for further hot water.

Please Note: - All of these methods can be practiced using loose hop pellets. Added to the fermenter, most of the used hops will sink to the bottom & very rarely end up in the bottle. This saves unnecessary packaging & cost to you!

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