

# AT HOME BARISTA MANUAL

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How to brew the perfect espresso



BARISTA  
ESSENTIALS

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# 01 Introduction

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Nothing beats a freshly brewed homemade espresso. That is why you are standing behind your new espresso machine and coffee grinder right now! But having brewed your first espresso, it didn't turn out quite as good as you would like. The espresso has too many sour or bitter flavors, but you don't know how to fix it. Every website provides you with different brewing tips and tricks, but they all tell you something else. How do you simply brew a good-tasting espresso?

You will need more than a decent espresso machine and a coffee grinder to prepare a good espresso. You will probably encounter some challenges when you start brewing. For example, when you finally manage to get all the ground coffee in the filter basket, but the espresso comes splashing out of the machine. Or when everything seems fine until you glance into your mug and notice a way too light-colored espresso.

Our barista manual is going to help you solve these kinds of problems. We explain how you prepare a great espresso step by step so you get a head start as an at-home barista. In addition, we will provide you with tips and tricks on further finetuning your espresso brewing routine. After completing this manual, you will be left with the basics of brewing the best espresso's - the base of any coffee!

## 02 Essential tools

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Before you can start brewing your espresso, you will need some barista tools apart from a semi-automatic espresso machine and a coffee grinder. The tools you must have for brewing are listed on the next page. Do you want to jump-start your learning process? Then you might want to take a look at all the tools we recommend. You can find these on page 13. And last but not least, you will need fresh coffee beans. It might initially seem insignificant, but you can't brew a good espresso without fresh beans. Old beans don't easily give a good extraction and a slightly poor crema. Long story short: fresh beans are a necessity!



01



Fresh coffee beans

02



Filter basket 20 grams

03



Double spout portafilter

04



Tamper

05



Milk frother jug 350 ml

06



Coffee scale

07



Knock box or knock out drawer

08



Tamping mat

09



Barista cups

# 03 Espresso brew recipe

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When brewing an espresso, you should pay attention to three main values. These are the amount of ground coffee, the amount of liquid espresso that ends up in your mug, and the amount of time it takes for the water to filter through the ground coffee. These three values, which you can find on the next page, are also known as the brew recipe. You can brew a nice espresso with any fresh bean based on these three values.

When you get the base right with one bean, there is always room for experimenting with other coffee beans. The perfect ratio of coffee, water, and extraction time differs slightly per coffee bean and its roasting. Of course, the balance also depends on your personal preference.

You might have to go through the steps in chapter four several times before getting the key values right. Don't give up! Every barista, at home or professional, started at this exact point. It takes time to master the art of pulling the perfect espresso shot and really understanding the brewing process. Every flawed cup of espresso gets you closer to the perfect brew.



**Tip!** Due to fluctuations with a single filter basket, you always want to pull a double shot for a better extraction. Do you only need one shot? Store the other one in the freezer or fridge to enjoy a delicious iced coffee later!



## 18 grams ground coffee IN

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The amount of ground coffee you put in the portafilter basket. This amount varies from 18 to 20 grams of coffee. The coarseness and amount of ground coffee determine the pressure building up.

## 36 grams liquid coffee OUT

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The amount of coffee you get in your cup after brewing.



## 25-30 seconds brewing time

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It takes the water some time to run through the coffee. We call this the brewing time. The brewing time has an impact on the ratio between sour and bitter flavors.

# 04 How to: pull the perfect espresso shot

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## 04.1. Grind the beans

Let's get started! Keep your laptop or phone within reach so you can closely follow our instructions. Firstly, we need to get 18 grams of ground coffee into the filter basket.



### Step 01

Turn on the coffee scale.



### Step 02

Place the portafilter on the scale diagonally to properly measure and press 'tare' to get the scale to zero grams.



### Step 03

Grind the beans directly into the filter basket.



### Step 04

Measure the weight by placing the portafilter on the scale in the same position as in step 02. Keep grinding beans until there are 18 grams of coffee in the filter basket.



## 04.2. Tamping and distributing

Great! You have got your 18 grams of ground coffee. Before we can pull an espresso shot from this, we have to prepare the coffee by distributing and tamping.



### Step 05

place the portafilter on the tamping mat.



### Step 06

Use a coffee distributor to smoothen the top layer of coffee in the filter basket. You could use your hand: slightly press onto the coffee while spreading it out. Try to waste as little coffee as possible.



### Step 07

Press the ground coffee with a tamper. Try to keep the tamper as straight as you can to prevent channeling. It doesn't matter how much pressure you put on the coffee as long as it's always the same.



**Tip!** If you can't keep the tamper straight on the coffee, the water cannot run through it evenly. This causes burnt coffee at certain spots, which results in a disruption of flavor. Therefore it is very important to tamp consistently. Try to do so by placing your hand over the tamper while resting your fingertips on the edge of the portafilter. Only use your body weight to press onto the coffee to ensure you always use the same amount of pressure.

### 04.3. Espresso brewing

It's espresso 'o'clock! It could be the case that your espresso comes through too quickly or too slowly, but don't worry about that yet. In the coming paragraphs we will pay some attention to adjusting the machinery for the perfect cup of coffee.



#### Step 08

Put the portafilter in the group head so it is properly locked.



#### Step 09

Grab the barista scale and place it on the drip tray of your espresso machine. Then, put your barista cup on the tray.



#### Step 10

Press 'tare' to remove the weight of the barista cup.



#### Step 11

Turn the machine on and, at the same time, press 'start' on the barista scale to activate the timer on the scale.



#### Step 12

Let the coffee run until you have 36 grams of coffee in your cup. Press 'stop' on the scale at the same moment. Note how many seconds it took you to pull a double shot of espresso.

## 04.4. Setting the coffee grinder

Based on the processing time described in step 12, we can now start tweaking the grinder. Rules are as follows:

### Over-extraction

A processing time of more than 30 seconds indicates that the water flows through the coffee too slowly. This over-extracted coffee has a bitter taste. A more coarse grind will generate more room between the coffee particles. This way, the water can get through more easily.

### Under-extraction

Did you get a processing time of less than 25 seconds? This implies that the water gets through the coffee too quickly. The coffee is now under-extracted and has a sour taste. Use a finer grind to create more resistance for the water flow.



### Step 13

First determine whether you are dealing with under- or over-extraction. Adjust the coffee grinder to the outcome of your extraction. Then, go through the steps 1 to 12 again.

### Step 14

Did you manage to brew 36 grams of espresso out of 18 grams of ground coffee in approximately 25 seconds? Congrats! You are now able to tweak your espresso machinery successfully.

### Step 15

Not a fan of espresso or regular coffee? Get your milk pitcher and turn that espresso into a delicious, creamy flat white, cappuccino or latte macchiato!



**Tip!** Learn how to taste your espresso! This way you can more easily adjust your coffee grinder. Bitter and sour flavors can taste similar but require different actions.

# 05 Additional tools

Now that you used our manual, you are familiar with the basics of espresso brewing. You can, however, dive into the process further. More consistency in the extraction of your espresso equals the right ratio of coffee and water, for example. That gets you that delicious espresso with a beautiful crema. The following tools are optional but get you from just a nice espresso to the perfect espresso. Over time you will be able to tell the difference in the espresso's you brew.



**Tip!** Save money on barista tools with our barista sets. You get all the essentials in one kit for an affordable price!





WDT-tool



Dosing funnel



Dosing cup



Coffee distributor



Puck screen



Bottomless portafilter

# 06 Cleaning

Before you close this manual and go on with your day, we briefly need to discuss clean-up. A machine that hasn't been cleaned badly affects the extraction and thus the taste of your espresso. To prevent that from happening, you should clean your machine after usage. Follow the steps below to clean your espresso machine easily.



Group head cleaning brush with measuring tool



Blind filter

- Step 01** Take the portafilter out of the group head of your espresso machine and knock out the puck in the knock box.
- Step 02** Clean the inside of the filter basket with a barista cloth.
- Step 03** Run some water through the group head to flush out any coffee residue.
- Step 04** Take the group head brush and clean the borders of the group head to clean any remaining coffee..

# 07 Contact

Got any questions?

Get in touch with us via [info@barista-essentials.nl](mailto:info@barista-essentials.nl)

Tips & tricks

Looking for more tips and tricks? Take a look at our [blogs!](#)

Barista essentials

Click [here](#) to find all essential espresso brewing accessories!

