

### Reference Charts for Enhanced Brewing

**Malt Extracts** (usually if you're replacing the sugar with malt, you should add about 1.2 kgs to your kit. Strive for a total malt-sugars weight of 2.75 to 3.25 kgs)

Lager	Lightest in colour & flavour. Use for lagers & light ales.
Amber	Darker colour – gives a reddish – brown colour. Great for amber ales, dark ales, etc.
Dark	For stouts & brown ales.

**Hops** (when dry hopping, use a lower alpha acid hop)

½ oz	Light, but noticeable hop profile
¾ oz	Medium hop aroma
1 oz	Full hop aroma & character

**Specialty Grains** (these grains do not have to be “mashed” and can be steeped to add flavour, colour, and grain complexity to your beer). Usually ½ to 1½ lbs of specialty grain is lots to impart the good grain flavour.

Lager or Pilsner Malt	Not a ‘specialty’ grain, (considered a base grain when mashing) but can be used as a light coloured grain to simply add grain flavour. Will not impart colour.
Crystal Malt	The most popular specialty grain. Comes in many colour grades denoted by a “Lovibond” rating. The lower the number (ie: 20L) the lighter the colour. Crystal malt can be very dark (up to 120L). Great for adding a reddish colour & clean, mild roasty character. Aid in head retention.
Chocolate Malt, Roasted Barley, and Black Patent Malts	Nutty-chocolate-coffee background flavours. Use sparingly (a lot goes a long way), unless making a stout or black beer, where increased quantities can be tolerated.

**Sugars** (only use as much as needed to bring up total malts to 3 kg)

Dextrose or Liquid Glucose	Very fermentable; will not add colour – just alcohol
White Table Sugar	Don't use it!!!
Brown Sugars, Molasses, dark syrups, etc.	Will add rich molasses-like flavours plus colour. Don't over do it, though. One cup is a good place to start.
Honey	Great for a clean finish (very fermentable), and should impart a nice honey background. Usually use 1 kg, added to 2 kgs malt base. Should be boiled.

**Homecraft Brew & Wine Supplies Inc.**  
 2787 Princess St Kingston, Ontario K7P 2X1  
 (613) 384-6088  
[www.homecraft.on.ca](http://www.homecraft.on.ca)

## ENHANCING YOUR BEER KIT

USING

### MALTS, GRAINS & HOPS



The beer kits on the market are just fine by themselves, but often, a little change here or there can do wonders for the overall quality & enjoyment of your kit beers. This brochure will introduce you to some small improvements you can make to your beer kits.

## Introduction

This brochure will aid you in making your kit beers better. There's a second one available for intermediate brewing, which will basically eliminate the "kit" from your process. The most advanced brewing is a process called "mashing" (basically making your own malts), and there is a third & final brochure available that enters into this final frontier.

There is a chart on the back page that may help you decide on which malts, sugars and grains you'd like to use. Hop varieties are covered in more detail in another brochure dealing solely with hops. Always remember, there's complete flexibility in what ingredients you choose. That's the best part of making your own beer – you get to make it just the way *you* like it.

In a nutshell, you can make more flavourful kit beers using some or all of these suggestions:

1. Use malt extract to replace sugar
2. Experiment with "unfermentable" sugars
  3. Add crushed grains
  4. Dry hop
  5. Use a yeast starter
6. Improve your water source

## Malt Extract Instead Of Sugar

Malt is the good stuff in beer. That beer kit you use contains malt extract, with hops already added for bitterness. Then they call for sugar to be added.

Sugar is required to bring your alcohol up to the 5% level. However, it does not add anything else to your beer. No body, no flavour, no colour, and impedes head retention. In a way, it takes away from the quality of the beer by lightening it. Now, should you choose to *replace* that sugar with more malt, you'll get that higher quality beer, with much more flavour, body, and better head retention. About 1.2 kg of malt extract will replace completely the 1 kg of dextrose you normally use (you'll still need the 1.5 cups of dextrose for bottling, though). Definitely a must for darker beers.

## Unfermentables

"Body" is a term you often hear when talking about beer. It refers to mouthfeel, or how heavy a beer feels in your mouth (in contrast, water has no "body"). Generally that's a good quality to have, if it's a full bodied beer you're looking for. The heavier a beer is (fuller bodied), the smoother it tastes, and retains its head more easily. You can increase the body of your beers by adding malt instead of sugar, and/or adding unfermentable sugar to your beer (such as Kreamyx®, or Brewbody). Four ounces (125g) is a good place to start.

## Crushed grains

An easy way to add grain complexity and flavour to your beers! It works in any type of beer, and contributes directly to the flavour of your beer. Simply add some crushed specialty grains (see back page) to a Pyrex® dish, and pour in 2 cups of boiling water. Let them steep for 15 minutes, strain, and then pour the liquid into your primary with the rest of your ingredients (leaving the spent grains behind).

## Dry Hopping

Hops are generally used for bittering beers, but they have to be boiled to achieve this. If you do *not* boil hops, and just toss them directly into your primary fermenter, you'd get a little bit of fresh hop flavour, and some fresh hop aroma in your beer! It's incredible the difference just a half-ounce will do – you'll even notice it while it's fermenting. It's an easy way to "freshen up" your next batch.

## Yeast Starter

Yeast will ferment your beer just fine if sprinkled on top... that's how many people make their beer. However, if you were to fill a mug half full with lukewarm water (75°F), and sprinkle your yeast into it, the yeast cells will have a chance to "start" on their own before being thrust upon your wort. It doesn't sound like a big deal, but the fermentation will start sooner, and your yeast will be in a healthier state for the duration of fermentation, so it's all around best for the yeast if you do a starter.

## Water

If making all-grain beer, you should stick to filtered water or boiled & cooled tap water, because all-grain beers need the minerals. But, no beer needs chlorines, scale, lime, etc. which is the stuff from your tap. Kit beers want the cleanest source you can find - it all boils down to taste. 90% of your beer is water, so avoid city water, and use something that simply tastes good. The more pure the water (distilled), the better for your kit.