



How to Brew: Everything You Need to Know to Brew Beer Right the First Time

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Introduces brewing in a easy step-by-step review that covers the essentials of making good beer. This book includes ingredients, methods, recipes and equipment information. It provides reference to intermediate techniques like all-grain brewing variations and recipe formulation.

How to Brew: Everything You Need to Know to Brew Beer Right the First Time Details

Date : Published May 17th 2006 by Brewers Publications (first published June 2001)

ISBN : 9780937381885

Author : John J. Palmer

Format : Paperback 347 pages

Genre : Alcohol, Beer, Brewing, Nonfiction, Reference, Food and Drink, Food, Cooking

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From Reader Review How to Brew: Everything You Need to Know to Brew Beer Right the First Time for online ebook

Thee_ron_clark says

If you make your own beer and own one book on the subject, this should be it. From start to finish, Palmer explains each brewing style and methods in easy to comprehend details. For those still not quite getting it, the book also includes pictures.

Want to know about hop usage? What type of hop for each variety of beer? Need to know the bitterness level? It's in here.

Want to know more about grains? Which can be steeped? What grains must be mashed? How much of certain grain types should be used at the most? What flavors, colors, or aromas do different grains impart? It's in here.

How and when do you make a yeast starter? It's in here.

You get the point by now. This is a brewer's bible in a sense. It's a great source of reference and includes a number of recipes as well.

The one con I found was that the hop, yeast, and grain sections are outdated. This has nothing to do with the author, but with the advances of brewing.

Now, you can find some of this book online for free. It is drastically cut though, but will give you a good idea of what it includes.

Regardless, if you homebrew or are considering it, buy this book. You won't regret it.

Rob says

Of the two books that were recommended to me (Papazian's *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing* , and Palmer's *How to Brew*), this is the one that "clicked" the best with me. Whereas Papazian's approach was colloquial and laid-back, Palmer is a bit more methodical and scientific. This isn't to say that Papazian doesn't know his stuff, nor that he isn't scientific at all, but rather that it's more conversational and somehow that makes it harder to pull out the information that I felt I needed as a "what's a wort?"-stage beginner.

That being said: I found myself repeating Papazian's "don't worry...have a homebrew" mantra to myself every time Palmer started going deep on yeast starters or hop varieties but (*but*) if I had to pick only one then I'd pick Palmer. (But since I don't have to pick only one, I'll recommend both.)

Irka says

Really, everything you need to know, and a lot more...

I can't wait to start my own homebrewing, so I can start to understand (and use) some of the stuff I read.

Lee says

A must have for homebrewers. More data and info than you could poke a stick at.

Steve says

At this point, I have not read every word on every page of this book (although I assume in the end I probably will). I have picked up a huge number of valuable brewing tips in here, and anyone who has tasted my beer has benefited.

Justin Provost says

I came away from this book being unable to think of a single thing that I thought could have been better explained.

There is no shortage of information here, and the book works for all levels of home brewers. It is organized in an interesting way, starting off with a "just jump in and brew" attitude. From there it goes to describe the process a few times, at different stages of complexity.

Palmer also goes into depth with advanced topics including everything from fluid dynamics to constructing you own equipment. He is aware when he might be getting in too deep for the casual brewer, and mentions that these sections can be skipped. But it is great that they are included, because this book can therefore be kept for easy reference whenever a brewer wants to dive in deeper.

I will be keeping this book at the ready whenever I am brewing.

Jonathan Pistorino says

Hands down the best brewing book for learning how to brew and beginning to learn advanced techniques in brewing. John Palmer does an absolutely superb job in breaking down the complexities of brewing. If you are looking for something even more advanced, *Designing Great Beers* by Ray Daniels is the way to go.

Andrew Bell says

Probably the best book to read for a beginning brewer. Palmer covers pretty much any topic a basic brewer could need from abstract to specific details. Well written and laid out. Illustrated and easy to follow. I recommend this to anyone who has ever considered brewing. A few items are a bit dated. The techniques are

solid, but the recipes are not quite in line with modern homebrewing recipes (IPA hop schedules for example).

It is a beginners bible. I do own a copy, and reading this is a must. That said. I WOULD NOT BUY THIS BOOK. It might be nice to have a physical copy, but for some reason (maybe out of his wishes to better educate a new generation of brewers), Mr. Palmer offers a slightly older (not much) version of the COMPLETE book on his website. Go there first! Happy brewing!

Eric Hinson says

Can be a bit on the technical side, but very very informative. Coming into homebrewing from a food science background I see this almost as a textbook. Definitely one for the reference shelf for re-reading and reminders.

Christopher Fisher says

I have seen the light. This book did everything it said it would, taking me through the basics of brewing, from extract to all-grain. I'm confident that, given the right equipment and the information herein, I could make any of the common styles right in my lovely kitchen. The prose is friendly and accessible, too, as you would think any book about beer should be. I especially appreciate the author setting those kit instructions straight (reserving the last half of extract to add to the boil at knock-out, for example, makes a big difference). I understand now why this was at the top of the "recommended" list from all my more-seasoned homebrewing friends. It's definitely at the top of mine.

Jeff King says

There is no doubt that this is an amazing book on brewing. It covers every aspect of beer brewing. In fact I find that for myself and many others I'd say that it maybe covers a bit too much. The book is 400 or so pages and has more info then you can shake a stick at. And at some point in your brewing education you will want to own this book and many others. But the amazon description for this is at best, um, lacking?

"Everything needed to brew beer right the first time. Presented in a light-hearted style without frivolous interruptions, this authoritative text introduces brewing in a easy step-by-step review."

This is a 400 page tome and you can only give me two quick sentences that really don't describe it at all? You get the feeling that this book is designed for entry level brewers and honestly I don't feel that for most people who are new to brewing that this is a good book to start with.

To be fair I must add this disclaimer at this point. I am an author and a micro publisher in this same filed. My books are focused mainly on Home Distilling (aka Moonshine). And I hate being called an "author" I'm just a guy with a bunch of experience who likes to share what he has learned.

Now I'm a pretty smart guy. Not to toot my own horn but I can rebuild an engine, build a house, work on computers and in my day job I manage a small video game company in the Silicon Valley. I have patents to

my name and can even make a pretty good pumpkin bread. But long ago I found that I'm not the sort to sit down, read a text book and just absorb everything in it. My learning curve looks more like stairs. I have one friend who can't even cook but after reading How to Brew he was making world class beers a month later. He also has issues being in public and talking to people who are in the same room with him.

What I found is that I'm not alone. The vast majority of people I know, myself included, just don't "download" data like this. They need to absorb it in progressive steps. I mean, think about college, there is a reason classes are staged 101, 201, 301 and 401. This book felt like it was trying to download too much too fast... at least for someone who is an entry level brewer as the description seems to be implying that this book is designed for.

The book is great. Palmer really tries to break the mold of the dry text book kind of mold. I found it fun to read and insightful. He has some other issues such as jumping around a bit and also using some terms early in the book that are not discussed until a couple hundred pages later. But I think the biggest issue is the level of technical detail. 99% of brewers will never need to use a great deal of the chemistry that is covered in this book. And as such it has a tendency to go off the rails of what is really needed to make good beer and into the geeky realm of why one chemical will bond with X, Y or Z. Even most commercial brewers don't consider the issues at that level and certainly no beginning brewer does. This seems a classic example of a book trying to be all things to all people. I'm sorry but I don't feel that a book for beginners should also try to cater to experts as well.

As someone who learned about moonshining up in the hills of Kentucky the brewing aspect of shining was not the primary focus. And you can be sure that I never saw anyone taking a scientific approach to anything. Once I realized how much of distilling was really about brewing I tried to back fill my knowledge on the subject. I've read most books on brewing over the past 20 years and I doubt if I've read one that covers every aspect of brewing as well as this book does. The question is does it all "belong" in one book?

Different people learn by different methods. I HIGHLY recommend this book for brewers who have done a good bit of brewing and are looking to fill in some gaps. For serious brewers who are looking for even more technical knowledge. For the hobbyist who must read/own every book on the subject. And for beginning brewers who are the type who can pick up a technical book, digest it totally and just go from there. Good on ya, I wish I was wired like that.

For everyone else... I'd say pass, at least for now. If you stick with it at some point you will want this in your brewing library until then baby steps.

Final note. There have been several issues reported with the Kindle version and it's "readability". Format issues and clarity of charts as well as pictures. I would suggest that you avoid the ebook version. Even if these issues are corrected this is a reference book. This is something that you will probably want to make notes in and be able to grab and flip open to a dog earned page. And you are going to want to do this near to where you are brewing. This is not an environment that is friendly to e-anything. Mash is essentially sugar water and it will destroy any electronic that it meets up with.

Wil Wheaton says

Extremely useful for anyone interested in homebrewing, and a perfect companion to *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing*.

If you can make oatmeal, you can make beer.

Davy says

I started reading this over Christmas break as soon as I opened my first brew kit, and was very happy to learn how simple this can be. Talking to my friend and beer mentor at work about concepts in this book, the one big take away was a focus on sanitizing and making sure your instruments are ALWAYS cleaned then sanitized. I'm glad that was went over multiple times in the book.

Although this is targeted towards beginners, when talking about the HOW's and explaining the science behind yeast and fermentation, I got a little lost, and now reading *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing* to help fill in some gaps.

Dustin Underwood says

This is a fantastic introductory book. If you really give it your attention, it will carry you through to some fairly advanced brewing.

I read this after taking the introductory course at our local brew shop. It has helped me unstick fermentations and identify flaws in several of my beers. Definitely worth the read.

The production value is what holds this back from a 5 star review for me. A lot of the information feels very dated - especially the sections concerning quality of ingredients available. Nowadays, you can get almost anything and get it fresh, but Palmer still refers to buying dusty cans of extract that have been sitting for months/years. Also, an update to include better and more images would be welcome. Many of the images are amateur ones of Palmer decades ago in his kitchen - others are corny clip art that look like they are from a 90s copy of MS Publisher.

Keeshi says

I picked this up after starting my first batch of beer, which for me was the best time to read it. I couldn't put it down. Half way through the book, I discovered that my local brew shop is a pretty good one. They start beginners here with recipes that have a high success probability with fairly low screw up potential, and fresh, high quality ingredients. I didn't know that though, until I read *How to Brew*.

If you read the book *before* you brew your first batch of beer, it may be a bit overwhelming. It needn't be. The first few chapters seem to be designed as a standalone beginner's guide that one could read without digging into the rest, as a way of getting started. Once I picked up the book, I skimmed this section fairly quickly.

The rest of the book is fairly dense and appears to be a good reference to come back to again. I especially enjoyed the descriptions of yeast and hops varieties and am encouraged to jump into all grain brewing with this book as my guide.
