

CAMRA BEER STYLE GUIDELINES FOR TASTING PANELS AND BEER AWARDS

STYLE: MILDS

- Black to dark brown to pale amber
- May have malt aroma and taste
- May have light hop aroma and taste
- May be sweet
- May have slight diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch)
- Low in alcohol

PALE MILDS

- May have light fruit aroma and taste

DARK MILDS

- May have light roast malt or caramel aroma and taste
- May have liquorice, chocolate or burnt aroma and taste

SCOTTISH 60 SHILLING BEERS

- Dominance of sweetness, light bitterness, smooth body

Alcohol by volume: up to 4%

Typical original gravity: up to 1040

Bitterness 14 - 28 EBU

STYLE: BITTERS

- Typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler
- Should have evident hop aroma and taste (typically earthy, spicy or peppery)
- May have light to medium malt
- Should have medium to strong bitterness
- Should be light- to medium-bodied
- Diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) should be minimised
- Fruit should be light and not distract from hop character, although citrus fruit tastes are associated with some hop varieties.

LIGHT BITTERS or 'BOYS' BITTERS'

- Light-bodied
- Low in alcohol
- Should have evident hop and bitterness
- May have light malt

Alcohol by volume: up to 4%

Typical original gravity: up to 1040

Bitterness 20 - 40 EBU

STYLE: BEST BITTERS

- Typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler
- Should have strong hop aroma and taste (typically earthy, spicy or peppery)
- May have light to medium malt
- Should have medium to strong bitterness

- Should be light- to medium-bodied but more robust with a more evident residual maltiness than lower strength bitters
- Diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) should be minimised
- Fruit should be limited, although citrus fruit tastes are associated with some hop varieties

Alcohol by volume: 4.1-4.6%

Typical original gravity: 1041-1046

Bitterness 20 - 40 EBU

STYLE: STRONG BITTERS

- Typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler
- Should have assertive hop aroma and taste (typically earthy, spicy or peppery), medium to strong bitterness
- May have more pronounced residual maltiness than in other bitters
- Should be full-bodied
- Diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) should be minimised
- May have medium to strong fruitiness which can be estery, such as pear drops, although citrus fruit tastes are associated with some hop varieties.

INDIA PALE ALES (IPAs)

- Well-fermented strong bitters with little residual sweetness
- Should have high levels of hop (typically earthy)

AMERICAN INDIA PALE ALES (IPAs)

- Well-fermented strong bitters with little residual sweetness
- Should have high levels of hop (typically citrus-flavoured)

BLACK IPAS

- Typically black or dark brown
- Well-fermented strong bitters with little residual sweetness
- Should have high levels of hop
- Dark malts add colour but little flavour

Alcohol by volume: 4.7% or more

Typical original gravity: 1047 or more

Bitterness 25 - 80 EBU

STYLE: GOLDEN ALES

- Pale amber, gold, yellow or straw coloured
- Should have a powerful citrus-flavoured hop aroma
- Should have a strong hop taste, with citrus fruit creating a refreshing character
- Should have little or no malt aroma or taste
- Should have little or no diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch)
- Bitterness may be low to strong
- Should be light- to medium-bodied

Alcohol by volume: no specific limits

Typical original gravity: no specific limits

Bitterness 20 - 75 EBU

STYLE: SPECIALITY BEERS

Speciality beers are real ales that may be produced with novel ingredients including fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices, honey, coffee, cocoa, chocolate, flowers other than hops and cereals other than barley. This does not include small amounts of cereal adjuncts commonly used in standard beer styles, for example for head retention. However, if recipes are based on larger proportions of non-barley cereals then these beers are classified as speciality beers, but it is often difficult to characterise effects on flavour. Speciality beers may be top- or bottom-fermented. The category includes cask-conditioned lagers, beers made with specialist yeasts (including wild yeasts) or unusual balances of dark malts or hops, and beers of very high gravity. The classification is non-limitative and allows for continued innovation. Examples of groupings within the category are as follows:

- **Alternative cereals.** Wheat beers have wheat in their grist and the spicy and fruity flavours arising from the activities of a wheat beer yeast. They are often dry and refreshing but can be sweet, and may be served cloudy with yeast and/or protein haze. Rye and oats are also commonly used, and sorghum may be used to produce gluten-free beers.
- **Herb beers** are produced with little or no hop and have flavours of added herbs, either singly or in combination. They are often malty and strong in body or floral and light. Very-strong-alcohol versions may show Belgian beer characteristics and have very fruity flavours from specific Belgian yeast strains.
- **Spice beers** are produced with the addition of spices such as ginger or coriander. In some cases these can be extreme and dominate the character of the beer. Balancing factors of body, bitterness and fruit characters may be required to provide complexity.
- **Fruit beers** are produced using fruit or fruit extracts as an adjunct.
- **Field beers** use vegetables (e.g. pumpkin) or tree saps or tree tips as an adjunct.
- **Tree sap beers** are produced using the sugar from tree saps such as maple, birch, pine and spruce. This classification may include honey and may show a dry character due to limited residual sugars. Balancing bitterness and floral character may be important and astringency may be dominant if contact with bark occurs.
- **Specialist yeast beers** make (partial) use of special yeast, such as *Brettanomyces*, sake yeast or others.
- **Barrel-aged beers** have been aged for a period of time in a wooden cask or in contact with wood. In some cases casks previously used for spirits, wines or fortified wines may be used to impart specific flavours.
- **Lagers** are usually yellow or straw coloured but can be darker. They are light- to medium-bodied with a light to medium hop character and a clean, crisp malt character. Produced traditionally with very lightly kilned malts, often providing sulphury flavours like cooked sweetcorn.

STYLE: OLD ALES/STRONG MILDS

- Typically black or dark brown but can be paler

OLD ALES

- Should have a malty richness
- Should be full-bodied
- Should be fermentation characters such as fruity estery flavours
- Considerable variation can occur within the style

STRONG MILDS

- May be richer in caramel than old ales
- May have a light roast malt character

Alcohol by volume: 4.1-6.4%

Typical original gravity: 1041-1064

Bitterness 20 - 50 EBU

STYLE: PORTERS

- Black or dark brown
- Should have firm roast malt (often coffee-like)
- Should have a pronounced finish through moderate bitter hopping
- May have raisin- or sultana-like fruit flavours
- Should have full mouthfeel

Alcohol by volume: no specific limits

Typical original gravity: no specific limits

Bitterness 20 - 50 EBU

STYLE: STOUTS

- Typically black

DRY STOUTS

- Should have an initial roast flavour
- Should have a distinctive dry roast, often coffee-like, bitterness in the finish
- The dry roast character is often achieved by use of roasted barley and can dominate the flavour profile, masking other flavours
- May have some astringency
- Should have a medium to rich mouthfeel

SWEET STOUTS

- Distinctively sweet in taste and aftertaste through the use of lactose
- May be cloying

IMPERIAL RUSSIAN STOUTS

- More intensity and much higher original gravities and alcohol levels than other stouts

Alcohol by volume: no specific limits

Typical original gravity: no specific limits

Bitterness 20 - 90 EBU

STYLE: BARLEY WINES AND STRONG OLD ALES

- An extraordinary alcohol content should be apparent
- May have a high residual sweetness due to residual sugars. Alternatively some barley wines are fermented to dryness.
- Should be full-bodied
- Should have a complex balance of characteristics to provide a strong overall impression

BARLEY WINES

- Amber to copper to tawny
- May have estery and ripe fruity characteristics, such as pear drop or strawberry
- May have medium to assertive bitterness

STRONG OLD ALES

- Typically dark brown or black
- May have a very rich malty character
- May have light roast malt
- May have dark fruit flavours
- May have chocolate or coffee flavour

Alcohol by volume: 6.5% or more

Typical original gravity: 1065 or more

Bitterness 30 - 75 EBU