

BREWING THE SHOT

Brewing great coffee repeatedly and consistently can be very challenging, and making espresso at home takes a lot more effort than any other brewing method. For those who choose to invest in the machinery required to do a good job, it is a hobby as much as a daily drinking ritual.

Coffee for espresso must be very finely ground, allowing the water to extract from a larger surface area. The result is a small, intense, viscous drink with a foam called crema; that highlights all the good, but potentially also the bad, qualities of the bean, roast, and preparation.

BREWING ESPRESSO CAN BECOME A HOBBY OR A DAILY DRINKING RITUAL. IT REQUIRES SOME WORK, BUT IS GREAT FUN TO MASTER

TIP

You may have to throw away several shots each day before you grind your coffee to the right coarseness and get a shot you are happy with.



1 Distribute the coffee evenly by gently shaking the portafilter or tapping it gently on the counter. Use a designated distribution tool (as shown) if you prefer.



2 Use a tamper that fits the size of your basket. Keeping it level to the edges of the basket, press the coffee down with a firm push to create a solid puck of even thickness. It is not necessary to apply excessive force, to tap the portafilter, or to tamp repeatedly.



3 The goal is to push all the coffee down and create a firm, even bed of grounds that will withstand the pressure of the water and allow the water to flow through and extract the coffee evenly.



4 Insert the portafilter into the group head, and immediately activate the pump to brew, using either the volumetric settings for two shots of espresso or the free-flow button, which you switch off when you reach the desired volume.



5 Place a warmed espresso cup under the spouts (or two cups if you wish to split the shot into two singles).



6 The coffee should appear after 5-8 seconds, dripping and flowing with a deep brown or golden colour that lightens as the brew progresses and the solubles are washed out. You should extract around 50ml (1½ fl oz) in 25-30 seconds, including crema.

TIP

Don't press down as you level the bed of ground coffee – use a tool or your finger and move the mound of coffee from side to side and up and down until you have loosely filled in all of the gaps.



FLAT WHITE

 GEAR **ESPRESSO**  DAIRY **MILK**  TEMP **HOT**  SERVES **1**

Originally from Australia and New Zealand, this recipe varies from region to region. The flat white is similar to a cappuccino, but has a stronger coffee flavour, less foam, and is usually served with elaborate latte art on top.



- 1 Warm the cup on top of your machine or by heating it with hot water. Using the technique on the previous page, brew **two shots/50ml (1½fl oz) of espresso** into the cup.
- 2 Steam **about 130ml (4fl oz) milk** to about 60–65°C (140–150°F), or until the pitcher is just too hot to touch.
- 3 Pour the milk over the coffee, holding the jug close to the cup and pouring with a gentle side-to-side rocking motion. Aim for a 5mm (¼in) layer of foam.

SERVE IT UP Serve immediately – the longer the drink is sat waiting, the more likely it is that the milk will lose its glossy shine.

TRY FRUITY OR NATURALLY PROCESSED COFFEES. COMBINED WITH MILK THEY BRING OUT A FLAVOUR REMINISCENT OF STRAWBERRY MILKSHAKE

