

Storing and Pouring

Storing your beer

Brewers set their expected shelf life to about three months because its quality is affected by both temperature and light. The truth is beer can last much longer if stored in the proper conditions. Imported beers often have set best before dates of 12 months.

- Store beer in a cool, dark place with a temperature of approximately 2-10°C. Beer if ever frozen, must be discarded (proteins and alcohol separate out when frozen)
- Draught beer must be refrigerated at all times to maintain freshness and finished within one-two weeks with a home draught set up (depending on the type of system and dispense gas used).
- The ideal serving temperature is between 2° and 5°C for lagers and 5° and 9°C for ales

From Bottle to Glass

Beer is unique and tastes best when served in a special set of glasses reserved for beer alone. That's because milk, tea, coffee, and even the soap used to clean the glasses, leaves a residue that diminishes a beer's head.

- Here's a tip: to test the cleanliness of your beer glasses, dip them in clear water and turn them upside-down to drain. If the glass is clean, the water will sheet off the inside of the glass. If the glass shows droplets of water or streaks inside, it means there is still some residue left inside the glass. This in turn will cause the CO₂ to cling to the inside of the glass and cause your beer to go flat.
- Serve beer in a wet glass that's been washed in a mild fat-free detergent and rinsed several times in warm water. To prime your glass for a rich head, rinse it in pure, cold water just before you pour.

The fine art of pouring

Pouring out of the bottle is the crucial step to enjoying the beer the way the brewer intended.

The perfect glass of beer boasts a rich head of foam. It looks great, and by providing a natural cap for the beer's carbonation it yields a smoother, cleaner taste.

- When you pour the beer; put the neck of the bottle over the edge of the cool, wet glass, tilting the bottle to 45 degree angle. Start to pour down the sides of the glass and then when the glass has a small base, pour down the middle into the glass until you've created a fine, dense-textured head.
- At that point, lower the bottom of the bottle to reduce the flow until foam nears the top of the glass. Leave just enough space for the foam to rise to the lip of the glass.

Try this at home – take a sip from your bottle (remember how it tastes) and then pour into the glass with a good inch to two inches of foam. Smell it, savour it and notice if it is smoother and easier to drink.

