# Barista Training Manual

This manual is for café owners training a new barista who may never have used a commercial espresso machine. It follows the order things are learned behind a real bar: the grinder and the shot first, then milk, then speed and cleanliness during a rush. Adapt the numbers to your own recipe, machine and beans, and have the new barista practice each step with an experienced one before working the bar alone.

## What you'll need

- Your house espresso recipe (dose, yield, time)
- Scale accurate to 0.1 g
- Milk pitchers in two sizes
- Separate cloths for the steam wand and the bar

## Steps

**01** **Learn the house espresso recipe: dose, yield and time.**

For example 18 g of coffee in, 36 g of espresso out, in 25 to 32 seconds. Write your own recipe on a card by the grinder.

**02** **Flush the group head for 2 seconds before each shot.**

It clears old coffee and brings the water to temperature.

**03** **Wipe the basket dry before you dose.**

A wet basket makes water run through the coffee unevenly.

**04** **Grind into the portafilter and weigh the dose.**

Weigh every dose until you can hit it by feel, then keep checking a few times a shift.

**05** **Tamp the coffee level, with firm and even pressure.**

Settle the grounds flat first. Level matters more than force. Wipe loose grounds off the rim before locking in.

**06** **Lock in the portafilter and start the shot right away.**

Leaving it in the hot group head without brewing burns the coffee.

07 **Weigh and time every shot.**

Too fast: grind finer. Too slow: grind coarser. Change one thing at a time.

**Watch out:** Change the grind in small steps and pull a test shot after each change.

08 **Taste a shot every morning before service.**

Sour means under-extracted. Bitter and harsh means over-extracted.

09 **Purge the steam wand for 1 second before steaming.**

It clears water out of the wand so it doesn't end up in the milk.

10 **Fill the pitcher with cold milk to just below the spout.**

Always start with cold milk. Use the smaller pitcher for single drinks so you don't waste milk.

11 **Add air for a few seconds, then lower the tip to spin the milk.**

A short tearing sound means air is going in. Then lower the pitcher so the milk spins quietly. Less air for a flat white, more for a cappuccino.

12 **Stop when the pitcher is too hot to hold for more than a second.**

Overheated milk tastes flat and won't pour well. Use a thermometer until you know the feel.

**Watch out:** Keep your hand clear of the wand tip. Steam burns fast.

13 **Wipe and purge the steam wand right after every pitcher.**

Milk dried on the wand is hard to remove and grows bacteria.

14 **Pour the milk within 30 seconds of steaming.**

Tap the pitcher to pop big bubbles and swirl it until the milk looks glossy. Milk separates if it sits.

15 **Knock out the puck and rinse the basket after every shot.**

Never leave a used puck sitting in the portafilter.

16 **Keep the bar clean as you go.**

Wipe spills right away, keep wand and counter cloths separate, and refill beans before the hopper runs low.

17 **Learn the cup sizes and how much milk each drink needs.**

Post the cup sizes and milk amounts next to the machine for the first few weeks.

## How to adapt it

- Replace the example recipe with your own. Every bean and machine is different.
- Have new baristas pull 20 shots during a quiet hour before their first rush.
- Practice steaming with water and a drop of dish soap to save milk.
- Add each drink recipe as its own procedure.