

Brewing Methods: When to Use Each, and Why

Finer grind means shorter contact; coarser means longer. Every method is a trade between clarity, body and time.

COFFEE REFERENCE CARD

Method	Grind	Coffee : water	Water	Time	The cup	Use it when	At a market stall
Pour-over (V60, Kalita)	Medium-fine	20 g : 320 g (1:16)	200–205 °F	3–4 min	Clean, bright, shows the origin	The coffee is a light or medium single origin and you have time to stand over it	The showpiece. One person can pour about 17 an hour on one dripper. Needs the hottest water.
Chemex	Medium-coarse	1:16	200–205 °F	4–5 min	Very clean, light body (thick paper)	Brewing 3–6 cups of a delicate coffee at once	A manual batch brewer: brews straight into its own carafe, no power.
Clever dripper	Medium	1:16	200 °F	about 3½ min	Body of a press, clarity of a filter	You want a good single cup without technique	Best single-cup method for one person: steeps unattended, drains through paper.
AeroPress	Fine to medium	16–18 g per cup	185 °F	under 2 min	Smooth, low bitterness	Travelling; one cup; water that is not quite hot enough	Fastest to order, and happy with cooler water from an airpot.
French press	Coarse	30 g : 450 g (1:15)	Just off the boil	4 min	Heavy body, oils, some sediment	Medium and dark roasts; coffee with milk	A 32 oz press makes three cups at once. Bring clean spares; no rinsing on site.
Batch drip into an airpot	Medium	55–63 g per litre (1:16–1:18)	200 °F	5–6 min	The reliable house cup	Serving many people the same coffee	Tasting samples and the house coffee. Holds 3 hours in a sealed vacuum pot.
Phin	Fine	2 tbsp in a 4 oz phin	Off the boil	5–7 min	Small, strong, syrupy	Dark roast or robusta, with condensed milk, over ice	A 24 oz phin makes 6–12 servings unattended. The signature drink.
Moka pot	Fine, coarser than espresso	Basket filled level	Start with hot water	4–5 min	Strong and rich; not espresso	You want an espresso-like base at home with no machine	Needs a burner. Not a stall method.
Flash brew (iced)	Medium-fine	23 g : 220 g hot + 130 g ice	200–205 °F	3–4 min	Bright, aromatic iced coffee	Iced coffee that still tastes of the bean	Made at the stall, so no licensed kitchen needed. Pour over fresh ice.
Cold brew	Coarse	340 g : 1.9 L	Cold	8–24 hours	Mellow, low acidity, chocolatey	Large volumes of iced coffee; coffee with milk	Cannot be made at home for sale. A shop product.
Espresso	Very fine	18 g in : 36 g out	195–205 °F	25–30 s	Concentrated; the base of milk drinks	There is a machine, a dedicated grinder and mains power	Not without a generator or an outlet. For the shop.

- **Immersion methods** (press, Clever, AeroPress, phin) free the hands while they steep. **Pour-over** does not.
- **Light roasts** want hotter water and a finer grind; **dark roasts** want cooler water and a coarser one.
- **One rule for every method:** grind just before brewing, weigh the coffee and the water, and change one thing at a time.