

Ordinary Bitter
Notes from Jamil's Ordinary Bitter Show, dated January 30, 2006

Style is all about balance - features the malt, hops, fruity esters and even pub character. It is a very drinkable low gravity beer.

- ❖ Profile - Moderate hoppiness/bitterness, malty background, hop flavor and aroma, hint of caramel
- ❖ Balance is the key, maybe slightly towards the hop, have to be able to drink 6 in a night!
- ❖ Usually served as a cask ale; difficult but not impossible to do at home

Malt

- ❖ All-Grain: use English Pale Malt, such as Maris Otter or Golden Promise (gives it the biscuity, nutty flavor) and specialty grains, some of which is crystal
- ❖ 10% specialty grains is about right
- ❖ Extract: use 4.3L malt extract (try for English Pale Malt base such as Maris Otter) with specialty grains
- ❖ Either way shoot for OG 1035 (style range is 1035 to 1040)

Hops

- ❖ Use EKG – good for all English ales; could also use Willamette, Fuggles, Challenger
- ❖ Use a hop ratio of .8 to .9 (IBU/OG) to get the right balance; shoot for IBU = 30
- ❖ Bitterness comes from early hop additions
- ❖ 60 minutes bittering, 10-30 minutes flavor, knockout for aroma
- ❖ Can dry hop but don't overdo it; try ¼ oz

Water

- ❖ Use what you have, filter for chlorine, could use salts if you want.
- ❖ Still adjust for pH as usual

Yeast

- ❖ Use an English Ale Yeast – necessary to get the low level of fruity esters
- ❖ White Labs 002, 005, Wyeast 1968, 1318, Saf-Ale 04, Nottingham, etc.
- ❖ Starter not always necessary – note how most yeasts tell you to make a 1035 starter which is exactly what the ordinary bitter is! But use one if you want.
- ❖ Ordinary bitter makes a great yeast cake to reuse for other English Ales

Process

- ❖ Single Infusion Mash, 152°, 90 minutes; could go for a higher mash temp to get more body but you're starting to get away from the style
- ❖ Ferment at 66°-69° degrees to give the fruity esters you need for this style (he recommends 67°)
- ❖ Carbonate 1.5 volumes; lower carbonation helps the beer and gives the creamy smoothness; higher carbonation makes it sharp, bitter, harsh, acidic and awful
- ❖ Serve at 50°; let it warm to high 50's

All-Grain Recipe

- ❖ 6# English Pale Malt, such as Maris Otter or Golden Promise (gives it the biscuity, nutty flavor), 1/2# Dark Crystal 120L, 1/4# Special Roast
- ❖ All EKG, 30 IBUs as follows: ¾ to 1 oz for 60 minutes, ½ oz for 30 minutes, ½ oz at knockout, ¼ oz dry hop