

Staffordshire Brewery Ltd
Unit 2, Harrison Way, Cheddleton, Staffs. ST13 7EF
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STAFFORDSHIRE BREWING SUPPLIES LEEK

13/11/2017

Beer Preparation

We bottle our beer straight out of the fermenter, at a temperature of about 8C, and an ending gravity of 1009 – 1010. This will allow the bottles to condition over a period of about one to three weeks in a warm room (20-25C).

There are other ways of preparing the beer before bottling, but this way is the most efficient.

We can give you more details over the phone, as there are several factors which influence how you prepare the beer, such as the type of yeast you use.

Set up

The bottle filler needs to be placed on a level table at a comfortable working height. Space also needs to be found for the bottle washer and bottle tree. For ease of use, this should be as close to the filler as possible.

Space is also needed for the crown capper the caps, and somewhere to place the bottles once they have been capped. We normally place them straight into a cardboard box.

The label can also be stuck on at this stage, but in our experience this is better done at a later time.

Cleaning

We wash the bottler and all pipe work etc with hot water. It is important to clean the siphons, and get water to run through them. It is easy to pull the bottler to pieces and clean each bit individually.

When we're happy that everything is clean, we spray all internal surfaces with peracetic acid (see bottle washing) and place the lid on.

Bottle Washing

We use a 1% mix of peracetic acid and water. We fill a 25 litre container. (250ml of peracetic, the rest, water.

The bottle washer is filled up, a bottle placed over the top and pushed down.

This sprays the inside of the bottle with the solution.

When filled, the first bottle may need pushing down a couple of times to start it off.

Now hang your clean bottle on the bottle tree and repeat until the tree is full of bottles.

We often check the washing solution for dirt, foreign objects, etc and change it as necessary.

Crown Caps

Decide what colour of caps you wish to use, and lay them out on a clean tea towel, or other clean cloth. The inside of the cap should be facing upwards.

Now spray them all with peracetic acid.

It is wise to have your caps set up between your bottler and capper, for ease of use.

Crown Capper

The caps are placed in the space provided. This is magnetic, and will hold the cap in place. Make sure you place it the right way up!

Place the bottle of beer under the capper and gently pull down on the handle.

DO NOT HOLD THE BOTTLE WHILST CAPPING. USE THE LOCATOR ARM.

Very occasionally a bottle may break whilst capping, and you will cut your hand if you are holding it.

Release the handle and the cap will be securely fitted to the bottle.

We always visually check that the cap is fitted properly.

It is also worth turning the odd bottle upside down to be double sure.

Syphon Bottle Filler

You may initially be surprised by the small size and simplicity of this unit.

We have tried several bottle fillers, and find that this one is not only the quickest to use, but also easy to handle and clean.

You can easily bottle upwards of 1000 bottles a day.

It can be easily adjusted to take several types of bottle.

Bottling Procedure

Using a clean pipe, connect the bottler to the beer source, and either gravity feed or pump beer (via a holding tank) into the bottler.

Once the bottler is full, it will automatically cut off the supply of beer, only filling up when the level drops. You initially need to adjust the position of the ball cock so that the reservoir fills to the correct level

We now need to start the siphon action. This could be said to be the fiddliest bit of the whole operation.

Place the plastic tube (half inch brewery tubing or clean hosepipe will do) over one of the protruding bottle fillers.

Now press the filler down into its open position and suck up through the tube.

Now bring the filler back up to its closed position and remove the tube.

Repeat on all the filler heads.

You are now ready to bottle your beer.

Now gently insert a bottle onto one of the filler heads without lowering it. When the bottle is fully inserted, let it fall into its filling position.

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When it is full (about 10 seconds) pull the bottle upwards and slide off.
Once the bottle is full, it will not overflow, and can be left on the filler for some time.

NB for hygiene purposes; always leave a bottle on each filling head to keep them clean. If you do leave them uncovered for any length of time, re-spray them with peracetic acid.

Place under the crown capper, cap the bottle and put in box.

The whole process is very quick once you get used to it.
Your bottles now need to be placed in a warm room for 1-2 weeks to condition.
They should clear within a few days. There are lots of variable factors though, and time scales may vary.

Shutdown Procedure

A very simple process – wash everything thoroughly, especially the filler heads. Make sure you remove all the beers from them by squirting water up the ends and out the other side. Any connecting tubes can be washed under a tap in warm water.

WARNING – **Do not** soak the plastic end bits on the siphon tubes in boiling water, as they may warp!

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