



9 Tips for the Beginning Brewer

1. Don't spend a ton of money on equipment.

If you have never made beer before, figure out the minimum equipment you need to buy for your first batch. Once you have a few batches under your belt, you can spend as much money as you want on stainless steel.

2. Use the buddy system.

Brewing with a friend can make the process more enjoyable. You'll have someone to talk to and help out with some of the work.

3. Buy your ingredients from a local shop.

Get to know your local homebrew-shop owner. They'll help you figure out what equipment you need to get started, and are a great resource when you have questions.

4. Look for a clone of a commercial beer you know you like.

This is where chatting with the local shop can help, too. If there is a particular beer you like, they may have a pre-assembled ingredient kit to make a similar beer. For your first few batches, stick with ales; lagers require more specialized equipment.

5. Follow the directions.

Your kit was assembled to give you the best results possible, so follow the recommendations included with the recipe. This will give your beer its best chance for success.

6. Don't worry about being perfect; you'll end up with beer.

Listening to some of my homebrewing friends talk about brewing stresses *me* out. You may have lots of anxiety about the process. Don't worry about being perfect, especially your first few batches. It's going to be beer and that's awesome.

7. Clean before you sanitize.

All websites and books I've read stress immaculate sanitization practices. You need to make sure your fermenter, siphon and anything that touches your beer post-boil is clean before it gets sanitized.

8. Share your beer.

Half the fun of homebrewing is telling people, "I made this," after they've enjoyed one of your beers. Even the beers that don't turn out quite the way you want are fun to get feedback about.

9. Find a club.

If you're curious about homebrewing, find a local club and attend their meetings. Club meetings are a great place to learn new techniques, sample other peoples' beers and talk about the brewing process with other people who love it, too.