

THE SIX MUST HAVES (IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT STERILIZING!)

- 1. FRESH** - Buy the freshest cans of brew. Most brew manufacturers are using a date stamp that has a best before of two years after canning. A can that has a one year to use by is probably a year old already. At this point the yeast is likely to be a bit tired and not do the job as well as it should. The malt is likely to have darkened a little and may have more distinct caramel flavours than a fresh can.
- 2. HOPS** – Whenever you have extra hops being added, ensure that they are fresh. The hops should be olive to dark green and not yellow or brown. Homebrewers Warehouse will always provide any extra hops in a foil lined pack that has been CO2 flushed and stored in a freezer.
- 3. YEAST** – The yeast is one of the most important ingredients. It does all the work of converting fermentable material into alcohol and CO2. It should be fresh (see **1.**) and should be added to the brew at the right temperature. Younga's 514 ale yeast has a 37 – 40-degree start. After the brew is producing CO2, the fermenter can be placed in a temperature-controlled situation like a fridge or cardboard box with ice bricks. 514 gives a good clean result at 20 – 25 degrees. Yeast will also perform much better with plenty of good aeration. Pour the filtered water in from a good height and give the brew a solid stirring before you add your yeast. Stir in your yeast.
- 4. GOOD SUGARS** – Most brews use extra sugars to get the alcohol up to gold or full strength. Cane sugar will produce harsh, acidic, cidery flavours and the more you use the worse the result. Dextrose as sold to brewers is a very clean sugar that will not produce any bad flavours. Extra malt (the can has 1.7kg of liquid malt) and DE17 corn syrup will improve the head, head retention and provide a smoothness/body to your beer. Our Goodies Pack has a combination of dextrose, malt, DE17 corn syrup and is a popular addition that will greatly improve a standard brew.
- 5. STERILIZING** – In 1993, when I started Homebrewers Warehouse, Sodium Metabisulphite was the standard. In setting up the shop, I noticed many good books with negative comments about Sodium Met. It needs to mix with an acid to produce sulphur dioxide and that only inhibits bacteria. It doesn't kill them! I had been using a keg and line cleaner, so I introduced our cleaner with sodium hydroxide and free rinsing agents. Being an alkaline cleaner followed by an acidic fermentation, it worked well. If you are wanting to go a bit further, we would recommend an acidic sanitizing.
- 6. WATER** – Our water, like many cities has a high chlorine level. High levels create a problem when the chlorine is digested by yeast. It produces antiseptic type flavours and aromas and is very offensive even in a few parts per billion. Use well filtered water for all your brewing. At our shop we have always offered free water to our customers as it is vitally important to ensure your beer is enjoyable.

Finally, keep working on improving your knowledge and please keep a record in a hard cover book of details like date, ingredients, procedures and any competition success!

Cheers, Younga