

## CAMRA BEER STYLE GUIDELINES

Original gravity ranges are used by CAMRA to determine a beer's style and alcohol by volume may vary from the typical ranges listed. Beers may also vary from other specified features or have their own peculiar balances and still be classed as true to style.

### STYLE: MILDS

**Milds** range from black to dark brown to pale amber in colour. Malty and possibly sweet tones dominate the flavour profile but there may be a light hop flavour or aroma. Slight diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) flavours are not inappropriate. Alcohol levels are typically low. **Pale milds** have a lightly fruity aroma and gentle hoppiness. **Dark milds** may have a light roast malt or caramel character in aroma and taste. Some **Scottish cask beers** will have mild characteristics with a dominance of sweetness, smooth body and light bitterness.

*Original gravity: less than 1043*

*Typical alcohol by volume: less than 4.3%*

*Final gravity 1004 – 1010*

*Bitterness 14 - 28 EBU*

### STYLE: BITTERS

**Ordinary bitters** are typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler. They have medium to strong bitterness, light to medium body and a light to medium malt character may be present. Hop character should be evident and diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) should be minimised. Fruit should be light and not distract from hop character, although citrus fruit tastes are associated with some hop varieties. **Light bitters** or '**boys' bitters**' are light bodied and low in alcohol but with evident hop character and bitterness; a light malt character may be present.

*Original gravity: less than 1040*

*Typical alcohol by volume: less than 4%*

*Final gravity 1006 - 1010*

*Bitterness 20 - 40 EBU*

### STYLE: BEST BITTERS

**Best bitters** are more robust than ordinary bitters. They are typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler. They have medium to strong bitterness, light to medium body but with a more evident residual maltiness. A strong hop character should be evident and diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) should be minimised. Fruit should be limited, although citrus fruit tastes are associated with some hop varieties.

*Original gravity: 1040 up to less than 1046*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 4.0-4.6%*

*Final gravity 1006 – 1012*

*Bitterness 20 - 40 EBU*

<b>STYLE:      STRONG BITTERS</b>
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**Strong bitters** are full bodied and possess assertive hop qualities. They are typically brown, tawny, copper, or amber but can be paler. They have medium to strong bitterness. Residual maltiness may be more pronounced than in other bitters. Fruitiness may be medium to strong and can be estery.

*Original gravity: 1046 or more*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 4.6% or more*

*Final gravity 1008 – 1015*

*Bitterness 25 - 45 EBU*

<b>STYLE:      GOLDEN ALES</b>
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**Golden ales** are pale amber, gold, yellow or straw coloured with powerful aroma hop, low to strong bitterness, light to medium body and a strong hop character, often with citrus fruit tastes creating a refreshing character. There should be little or no malt character or diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch).

*Original gravity: less than 1053*

*Typical alcohol by volume: less than 5.3%*

*Final gravity 1006 – 1012*

*Bitterness 20 - 45 EBU*

<b>STYLE:      SPECIALITY BEERS.</b>
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**Speciality beers** are less specific than standard British cask beer styles and may be produced using one or more novel ingredients including fruits, herbs, honey, cereals other than malted barley and flowers other than hops. The category includes cask-conditioned lagers, wheat beers and fruit beers. Other speciality beers may use specialist yeasts or unusual balances of dark malts or hops, or be of very high gravity. There are no specific guidelines for this category so be prepared to be surprised and award scores accordingly. Examples of groupings within this style are:

- Wheat beers - Not just beers using wheat in their grist but beers with the spicy and fruity flavours arising from the activities of a wheat beer yeast. Are often dry and refreshing and may be served cloudy with yeast and/or protein haze.
- Herb beers produced with little or no hop and evident flavour of added herbs, either singly or in combination. Are often malty and strong in body or floral and light. Very strong alcohol versions may show Belgium beer characteristics and have very fruity flavours from specific Belgium yeast strains.
- Spice beers produced with the addition of spices such as ginger and coriander. In some cases these can be extreme and dominate the character of the beer. Balancing factors of body, bitterness and fruit characters may be required to provide complexity.
- Tree sap beers produced using the sugar from tree saps such as maple, birch, pine and spruce. May include honey and result in a dry character due to limited residual sugars. Balancing bitterness and floral character may be important and astringency may be dominant if contact with bark occurs.

<b>STYLE: OLD ALES/STRONG MILDS</b>
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Typically black or dark brown but can be paler. **Old Ales** are full bodied with a malty richness. Fermentation characters such as fruity estery flavours should contribute to the flavour profile but considerable variation can occur within the style. **Strong milds** may be richer in caramel, or have a light roast malt character in aroma and taste.

*Original gravity: 1043 to less than 1065*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 4.3-6.5%*

*Final gravity 1008-1020*

*Bitterness 30-50 EBU*

<b>STYLE: PORTERS</b>
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**Porters** are complex in flavour and are typically black or dark brown. The darkness comes from the use of dark malts, unlike stouts, which use roasted barley. Porters should have a full mouthfeel and a pronounced finish through bitter hopping

*Original gravity: 1040 to 1065*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 4.0-6.5%*

*Final gravity 1008-1018*

*Bitterness 20-50 EBU*

<b>STYLE: STOUTS</b>
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**Stouts** are typically black. **Dry stouts** have an initial malt and caramel flavour with a distinctive dry roast bitterness in the finish. The dry roast character is achieved by use of roasted barley, which dominates the flavour profile, often preventing other flavours from appearing. Some astringency and a medium to rich mouthfeel are appropriate. **Imperial Russian** stouts can have some or all of these characteristics with more intensity and much higher original gravities and alcohol levels than other stouts. **Sweet stouts** are distinctively sweet in taste and aftertaste through the use of lactose and may have a cloying body.

*Original gravity: 1040 or more*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 4.0% or more*

*Final gravity 1006-1020*

*Bitterness 30-50 EBU*

<b>STYLE: BARLEY WINES AND STRONG OLD ALES</b>
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**Barley wines** range from amber to copper to tawny in colour and may have a high residual sweetness due to residual sugars. Alternatively some barley wines are fermented to dryness. Either way, look to see how the characters balance to provide a strong overall impression. In many barley wines estery and fruity characteristics are counter-balanced by medium to assertive bitterness and extraordinary alcohol content. **Strong old ales** have similar characteristics but are typically dark brown or black and may have a very rich malty character with light roast malt in aroma and taste.

*Original gravity: 1065 to 1120*

*Typical alcohol by volume: 6.5-12%*

*Bitterness 20 –75 EBU*