VANILLAGOODS BAKING ACADEMY · COFFEE, TEA & BARISTA SKILLS

Course workbook

Home Barista Basics

Brewing, espresso, milk drinks



Beginner · 5 video lessons · 41 minutes of video · Notes, quizzes and a practice log

By the end you'll be able to

- Dial in a brew ratio
- Steam milk for lattes
- Make a vanilla syrup and vanilla latte

Inside

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Lesson videos by The Coffee Chronicler, Feind coffee, Joshua Weissman, RealChrisBaca and Hanbit Cho, watched on YouTube from the course page.

This workbook belongs to _____

START HERE

How to use this workbook

This workbook goes with the free video course **Home Barista Basics** on vanillagoods.com. Watch each lesson there, then use these pages to keep what you learned and to track what you have practised.

1

Watch

Open the lesson page and watch the creator's video. Jot quick notes on the lined space as you go.

2

Read and tick

Read the VanillaGoods notes, then tick each key point once you can explain it in your own words.

3

Check and practise

Answer the three questions, compare with the answer key on page 13, then log your bake.

Your lesson plan

	LESSON	VIDEO	WATCHED	QUIZ	PRACTISED
1	**Pour-over coffee** Video by The Coffee Chronicler	5 min	☐	☐	☐
2	**French press** Video by Feind coffee	10 min	☐	☐	☐
3	**Espresso basics** Video by Joshua Weissman	8 min	☐	☐	☐
4	**Steaming milk for lattes** Video by RealChrisBaca	13 min	☐	☐	☐
5	**Vanilla syrup and a vanilla latte** Video by Hanbit Cho	5 min	☐	☐	☐

Tools you'll see

Pour-over dripper · Gooseneck kettle · Coffee scale with timer · Burr grinder · French press · Espresso machine · Milk frothing pitcher · Instant-read thermometer · Electric milk frother · Handheld milk frother · Swing-top bottles · Syrup pumps · Saucepan

Any brand works. The lessons show what each tool is for.

Keep track online too

On each lesson page, "Mark complete" saves your progress in your browser, with no account. Finish every lesson and the course page lets you print a free certificate of completion.

Pour-over coffee

Video by **The Coffee Chronicler**: *"3 Pour Over Mistakes Beginners Make"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/home-barista-1-pour-over-coffee

Brew a clean, balanced cup of pour-over coffee and avoid the three mistakes beginners make most often.

Key points

- [ ] Start with a 1:16 ratio of coffee to water
- [ ] Use water just off the boil, 195–205°F
- [ ] Adjust grind size to fix sour or bitter cups

A starting recipe

- 20 g coffee to 320 g water (about 1:16)
- Medium-fine grind, like table salt
- Water at 195–205°F (90–96°C)
- Bloom with about 40 g water for 30–45 seconds, then pour in slow stages
- Aim for a total brew time of about 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 minutes

Fixing your cup

- Sour or thin: grind finer or pour slower
- Bitter or harsh: grind coarser
- Weak: use more coffee for the same water

Watch for

A scale and a gooseneck kettle make pour-over far more consistent, and fresh beans make the biggest difference of all.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Pour-over dripper · Gooseneck kettle · Coffee scale with timer · Burr grinder

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What is a good starting ratio of coffee to water?

- (A) About 1:8
- (B) About 1:30
- (C) About 1:16

2 The cup tastes sour and thin. What do you change?

- (A) Grind finer or pour slower
- (B) Grind coarser
- (C) Use less coffee

3 Water for pour-over should be...

- (A) At a rolling boil
- (B) Just off the boil, 195 to 205°F
- (C) About 160°F

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

French press

Video by **Feind coffee**: *"How to Make a French Press Coffee (that tastes good)"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/home-barista-2-french-press

Make clean, full-bodied French press coffee with less sludge, using a coarse grind and a gentle finish.

Key points

- [ ] Use a coarse, even grind
- [ ] Steep about 4 minutes, then skim
- [ ] Pour gently instead of plunging hard

A starting recipe

- 30 g coffee to about 500 g water (roughly 1:16)
- Coarse grind, like breadcrumbs
- Water just off the boil
- Steep 4 minutes, then stir the crust and skim off the foam

The cleaner method

As shown in this video, waiting a few more minutes lets fine particles settle. Then lower the plunger only to the surface and pour slowly; pressing it to the bottom stirs the sediment back into your cup.

Watch for

Decant all the coffee right away. Left in the press, it keeps extracting and turns bitter.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: French press | Burr grinder | Coffee scale with timer | Gooseneck kettle

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What grind does a French press need?

- (A) Fine, like powder
- (B) Medium-fine, like table salt
- (C) Coarse, like breadcrumbs

2 For a cleaner cup, the plunger should be...

- (A) Lowered only to the surface, then the coffee poured slowly
- (B) Pressed firmly to the bottom
- (C) Left out

3 Why pour all the coffee out of the press right away?

- (A) The glass could crack
- (B) It keeps extracting and turns bitter
- (C) It loses its heat

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Espresso basics

Video by **Joshua Weissman**: *"The Espresso Guide For Beginners"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/home-barista-3-espresso-basics

The handful of espresso basics that matter most at home: dose, ratio, time and grind.

Key points

- [ ] Start with an 18 g dose and a 36 g shot
- [ ] Aim for 25–30 seconds
- [ ] Change the grind first when a shot tastes off

A starting recipe

- 18 g of finely ground coffee in the basket
- About 36 g of espresso in the cup (a 1:2 ratio)
- A shot time of 25–30 seconds
- A level, firm tamp

Dialing in

- Sour, fast shot: grind finer
- Bitter, slow shot: grind coarser
- Change one thing at a time and taste

Watch for

Preheat the machine, portafilter and cup, and use beans roasted within the last few weeks.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON Espresso machine · Coffee scale with timer · Burr grinder · Milk frothing pitcher

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What is the starting recipe for a double shot?

- (A) 10 g in, 60 g out, in 10 seconds
- (B) 30 g in, 30 g out, in 60 seconds
- (C) 18 g in, about 36 g out, in 25 to 30 seconds

2 The shot runs fast and tastes sour. You should...

- (A) Grind finer
- (B) Grind coarser
- (C) Tamp lighter

3 Which beans make the best espresso?

- (A) The oldest in the cupboard
- (B) Roasted within the last few weeks
- (C) Pre-ground, any age

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Steaming milk for lattes

Video by **RealChrisBaca**: *"Milk Steaming For Latte Art - Barista Tutorial | Chris Baca"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/home-barista-4-steaming-milk-for-lattes

Steam milk into silky microfoam for lattes and cappuccinos, from stretching to texturing to the right temperature.

Key points

- [ ] Start with cold milk and a cold pitcher
- [ ] Stretch briefly, then whirlpool
- [ ] Stop at 140–150°F

Step by step

- Purge the steam wand
- Place the tip just below the surface and add air with a gentle tearing-paper sound for a few seconds
- Sink the tip slightly to create a whirlpool that folds the bubbles into microfoam
- Stop at 140–150°F (60–65°C); the pitcher is just too hot to hold
- Tap and swirl until the milk looks glossy, like wet paint

Watch for

- Big bubbles: too much air or the tip too high
- No foam: the tip was too deep from the start
- Flat, sulfur taste: overheated milk

No machine?

Heat milk to 140–150°F and use a handheld or electric frother for a good home version.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Milk frothing pitcher · Instant-read thermometer · Electric milk frother · Handheld milk frother

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 What does the gentle tearing-paper sound tell you?

- (A) The milk is burning
- (B) The wand is too deep
- (C) Air is being added correctly, just below the surface

2 What temperature should steamed milk reach?

- (A) About 140 to 150°F
- (B) About 110°F
- (C) About 180°F

3 Big bubbles in the milk usually mean...

- (A) The milk was too cold
- (B) Too much air or the tip held too high
- (C) The tip was too deep

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

Vanilla syrup and a vanilla latte

Video by **Hanbit Cho**: *"The best Vanilla Latte | Obviously better than Starbucks"*

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-lesson/home-barista-5-vanilla-syrup-and-a-vanilla-latte

Make real vanilla syrup at home and use it to build a vanilla latte that tastes better than the coffee-shop version.

Key points

- [ ] Simple syrup is equal parts sugar and water
- [ ] A split vanilla bean gives the best flavor
- [ ] Use about 1–2 tablespoons per latte

Vanilla syrup

- Simmer 1 cup sugar with 1 cup water until dissolved
- Add a split, scraped vanilla bean and simmer 2–3 minutes, then steep as it cools
- Or stir in 1–2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract off the heat
- Bottle it and refrigerate for 2–3 weeks; leave the bean in for more flavor

The latte

Add 1–2 tablespoons (15–30 ml) of syrup to a cup, pull a double shot over it and top with steamed milk. Adjust the syrup to taste.

VanillaGoods tip

Grade B vanilla beans are made for infusing. They give syrups and extracts deep flavor at a lower price than Grade A.

TOOLS IN THIS LESSON: Swing-top bottles · Syrup pumps · Saucepan · Handheld milk frother

NOTES WHILE YOU WATCH

✓ Check yourself

Three quick questions from this lesson. Mark your answers, then compare with the answer key on page 13.

1 Simple syrup is...

- (A) Two parts water to one part sugar
- (B) Sugar dissolved in milk
- (C) Equal parts sugar and water

2 How much syrup goes in one latte?

- (A) About 1 to 2 tablespoons
- (B) About 1 teaspoon
- (C) About 1/2 cup

3 Which vanilla beans are made for infusing syrups?

- (A) Grade A
- (B) Grade B
- (C) Only extract works

Practice log

Practice is where the lesson sticks. Note what you made and what you would do differently.

WHAT I MADE	DATE AND HOW IT WENT
	☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT I'D CHANGE NEXT TIME

ANSWER KEY

Check your answers

One correct answer per question. If you missed one, the note explains why, and the lesson page has the full notes and the video.

1. Pour-over coffee

1 **C** Start at about 1:16, for example 20 g coffee to 320 g water, with a medium-fine grind.

2 **A** Sour or thin means under-extracted: grind finer or pour slower; bitter or harsh means grind coarser.

3 **B** Use water at 195 to 205°F and bloom the grounds with about 40 g of water for 30 to 45 seconds first.

2. French press

1 **C** A coarse, even grind, like breadcrumbs, gives a full-bodied cup with less sludge.

2 **A** Pressing to the bottom stirs sediment back into the cup; let the fines settle, lower the plunger just to the surface and pour gently.

3 **B** Coffee left on the grounds keeps extracting and turns bitter, so decant it all at once.

3. Espresso basics

1 **C** Start with an 18 g dose, about 36 g of espresso (a 1:2 ratio) and a shot time of 25 to 30 seconds.

2 **A** A sour, fast shot is under-extracted: grind finer. A bitter, slow shot: grind coarser. Change one thing at a time.

3 **B** Use beans roasted within the last few weeks, and preheat the machine, portafilter and cup.

4. Steaming milk for lattes

1 **C** With the tip just below the surface, a gentle tearing-paper sound means air is being stretched in; then sink the tip to whirlpool.

2 **A** Stop at 140 to 150°F, when the pitcher is just too hot to hold; overheated milk tastes flat and sulfurous.

3 **B** Big bubbles come from too much air or a tip held too high; no foam at all means the tip was too deep from the start.

5. Vanilla syrup and a vanilla latte

1 **C** Simmer 1 cup sugar with 1 cup water until dissolved, then add the vanilla.

2 **A** Use about 1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 30 ml) per latte, then adjust to taste.

3 **B** Grade B beans are made for infusing and give syrups and extracts deep flavor at a lower price than Grade A.

WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED

Three things to do next

1

Mark each lesson complete

The "Mark complete" button on every lesson page saves your progress in your browser. No account, nothing to sign up for.

2

Print your certificate

Once all 5 lessons are marked complete, the course page prints a free certificate of completion with your name on it. It records what you finished; it is not an accredited qualification.

3

Bake it

Practice with VanillaGoods recipes that use what this course teaches.

vanillagoods.com/pages/recipes?q=vanilla%20latte

NEXT ON THE LEARNING PATH

Pie & Tart Crust Masterclass

Intermediate · Flaky crusts, fillings, blind baking

vanillagoods.com/pages/baking-course/flaky-pie-crust

Free guide for this course: “Brew ratio card”, Coffee-to-water ratios for pour-over, French press, cold brew and espresso. Get it from the course page.

Baking with real vanilla? VanillaGoods keeps Madagascar, Uganda and Tahiti vanilla in stock, along with coffee and tea, at vanillagoods.com.

✧ Key points from every lesson

1. Pour-over coffee

- Start with a 1:16 ratio of coffee to water
- Use water just off the boil, 195–205°F
- Adjust grind size to fix sour or bitter cups

2. French press

- Use a coarse, even grind
- Steep about 4 minutes, then skim
- Pour gently instead of plunging hard

3. Espresso basics

- Start with an 18 g dose and a 36 g shot
- Aim for 25–30 seconds
- Change the grind first when a shot tastes off

4. Steaming milk for lattes

- Start with cold milk and a cold pitcher
- Stretch briefly, then whirlpool
- Stop at 140–150°F

5. Vanilla syrup and a vanilla latte

- Simple syrup is equal parts sugar and water
- A split vanilla bean gives the best flavor
- Use about 1–2 tablespoons per latte

The lesson videos are by independent creators (The Coffee Chronicler, Feind coffee, Joshua Weissman, RealChrisBaca and Hanbit Cho) and play in YouTube's own player on the lesson pages; this workbook links to them and copies nothing. Notes, key points, questions and this workbook are written by VanillaGoods for home bakers.

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