



NORTH AMERICAN BREWERS  
ASSOCIATION



# North American Brewers Association® Style Guide©



*These style guidelines are based on the classic, historical and well-established styles of beer as well as recognized industry advancements updated to reflect the marketplace. This fusion of new and old tries to define categories which the brewer can enter his or her product with confidence that the beer can be fairly evaluated and adjudicated. They have been organized in a more logical manner with a format consistent with the judge comment sheets.*

*The members of the North American Brewers Association Style Advisory Committee hope that their efforts are useful to you and are well received.*

*The Committee*

Revision:  
March 2021

## Table of Contents

Lager Beer Styles .....	1
Category 1: American-Style Light Lagers .....	1
Subcategory A: American-Style Light (Low-Calorie) Lager .....	1
Subcategory B: American-Style Standard or Premium Lager .....	1
Subcategory C: Latin American- or Tropical-Style Lager or Ale .....	1
Subcategory D: American Style Pilsner or Hoppy Lager .....	1
Category 2: European-Style Light Lagers .....	2
Subcategory A: Helles (Heller) Lager .....	2
Subcategory B: German-Style Pilsner .....	2
Subcategory C: Bohemian-Style Pilsner.....	2
Subcategory D: Dortmunder/Export .....	3
Category 3: Amber and Dark Lagers .....	3
Subcategory A: American-Style Amber Lager.....	3
Subcategory B: Vienna-Style Lager .....	3
Subcategory C: Märzen-Oktoberfest Lager .....	4
Subcategory D: Munich-Style Dark.....	4
Subcategory E: Schwarzbier (Black Beer) .....	4
Category 4: Strong Lagers .....	4
Subcategory A: Helles (Heller) Bock/Maibock.....	4
Subcategory B: Traditional Bock.....	5
Subcategory C: Doppelbock .....	5
Subcategory D: Eisbock.....	5
Subcategory E: Baltic-Style Porter .....	6
Category 5: Light Ales.....	6
Subcategory A: Cream Ale .....	6
Subcategory B: Light Ale .....	6
Subcategory C: Golden or Blonde Ale .....	7
Subcategory D: Kölsch .....	7
Subcategory E: English-Style Summer Ale.....	7
Category 6: American-Style Wheat Ales.....	7
Subcategory A: American-Style Wheat Ale .....	8
Subcategory B: American-Style Hefeweizen .....	8
Subcategory C: American-Style Dark Wheat Ale .....	8
Subcategory D: American-Style Dark Hefeweizen .....	8
Category 7: Pale Ales.....	9
Subcategory A: American-Style Pale Ale.....	9
Subcategory B: English-Style Pale Ale .....	9
Subcategory C: American-Style Strong Pale Ale .....	10
Category 8: India Pale Ales .....	10
Subcategory A: Session-Style India Pale Ale.....	10
Subcategory B: Hazy or New England-Style India Pale Ale.....	10
Subcategory C: English-Style India Pale Ale .....	11
Subcategory D: American-Style India Pale Ale .....	11
Subcategory E: Belgian-Style India Pale Ale .....	11
Subcategory F: Double or Imperial India Pale Ale.....	12
Category 9: Amber Ales .....	12
Subcategory A: Ordinary Bitter/ Best Bitter.....	12
Subcategory B: Strong Bitter ESB (Extra Special).....	12

Subcategory C: Scottish-Style Light.....	13
Subcategory D: Scottish-Style Heavy.....	13
Subcategory E: Scottish-Style Export.....	13
Subcategory F: Irish-Style Red Ale.....	14
Subcategory G: Altbier.....	14
Subcategory H: American-Style Amber Ale.....	14
Subcategory I: Double/Imperial Red Ale.....	15
Category 10: Brown and Black Ales.....	15
Subcategory A: English-Style Mild Ale.....	15
Subcategory B: English-Style Brown Ale.....	15
Subcategory C: American-Style Brown Ale.....	15
Subcategory D: Brown Porter.....	16
Subcategory E: Robust Porter.....	16
Subcategory F: Cascadian Style Dark Ale /American Black Ale.....	16
Subcategory G: Dry Stout.....	17
Subcategory H: Sweet Stout.....	17
Subcategory I: Oatmeal Stout.....	17
Subcategory J: Foreign-Style Stout.....	17
Subcategory K: American-Style Stout.....	18
Subcategory L: Imperial Stout.....	18
Category 11: Strong Ales.....	18
Subcategory A: Scotch Ale (Wee Heavy).....	18
Subcategory C: American-Style Strong Ale.....	19
Subcategory D: English-Style Barley Wine.....	19
Subcategory E: American-Style Barley Wine.....	20
Category 12: Continental-Style Wheat Ales.....	20
Subcategory A: Berliner-Style Weisse.....	20
Subcategory B: Belgian-Style Wit (White).....	20
Subcategory C: Kristall Weizen.....	21
Subcategory D: Bavarian-Style Hefeweizen.....	21
Subcategory E: Dunkelweizen/Weizen Bock.....	21
Category 13: Belgian- and French-Style Ales.....	22
Subcategory A: Belgian-Style Pale Ale.....	22
Subcategory B: Saison.....	22
Subcategory C: Bière de Garde.....	22
Subcategory D: Dubbel.....	23
Subcategory E: Tripel.....	23
Subcategory F: Belgian-Style Pale (Golden) Strong Ale.....	23
Subcategory G: Belgian-Style Dark Strong Ale.....	23
Subcategory H: Other Belgian-Style Ales.....	24
Category 14: Sour Ales.....	24
Subcategory A: Flanders-Style Red or Brown Ale.....	24
Subcategory B: Lambic, Fruit Lambic and Gueuze Lambic.....	25
Subcategory C: American Sour Ale.....	25
Subcategory D: Sour Ale with Brettanomyces/Mixed-Culture Brett Beer....	26
Subcategory E: Brett Beer.....	27
Subcategory F: Wood- and Barrel-Aged Sour or Brett Beer.....	28
Subcategory G: Classic Gose.....	29
Subcategory H: Flavored Gose.....	29

Hybrid Beer Styles .....	30
Category 15: Hybrid Beers .....	30
Subcategory A: California Common .....	30
Subcategory B: Rye Beer .....	30
Subcategory C: Hybrid Style Beers (two or more style traditions) .....	30
Subcategory D: Session Beer .....	31
Category 16: Smoke- and Wood Flavored Beers .....	31
Subcategory A: German-Style Rauchbier .....	31
Subcategory B: Smoke-Flavored Beer .....	31
Subcategory C: Barrel-Aged Beer .....	31
Subcategory D: Barrel-Aged Strong Beer .....	32
Category 17: Flavored Beers .....	32
Subcategory A: Honey Beer .....	32
Subcategory B: Fruit Beers .....	32
Subcategory C: Vegetable or Field Beers .....	33
Subcategory D: Pumpkin or Pumpkin Spiced Beers .....	33
Subcategory E: Herbed/Spiced .....	33
Subcategory F: Coffee Beers .....	34
Subcategory G: Chocolate/Cocoa Beers .....	34
Subcategory H: Chili Beer .....	34
Category 18: Specialty and Experimental Beers .....	34
Category 19: Cider and Perry .....	35
Subcategory A: Draft Cider and Apple Wine .....	35
Subcategory B: Traditional Cider/Cidre .....	35
Subcategory C: Farmhouse Style Cider .....	35
Subcategory D: Fruit Flavored Cider and Perry .....	36
Subcategory E: Specialty (Flavored) Cider and Perry .....	36
Subcategory F: Perry .....	36
Category 20: Alternative Products .....	36
Subcategory A: Soft Drinks N/A .....	36
Subcategory B: Hard Soft Drinks (Sodas) .....	37
Subcategory C: Hard Seltzers .....	37
Category 21: Collaboration Beers .....	37
Category 22: Brewing School Beers .....	37

## Lager Beer Styles

### Category 1: American-Style Light Lagers

#### Subcategory A: American-Style Light (Low-Calorie) Lager

- **Appearance:** Color is extremely pale light straw to straw. Bright without haze. Head formation is moderate, head retention is frequently weak.
- **Aroma:** Low malt aroma. Hops are barely detectable at low levels. Slight acetaldehyde is okay but none is preferred. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** The flavor profile is similar to American Standard with low malt flavor. It may have a very slight corn-like sweetness from use of brewing adjuncts. Hop flavor and bitterness range from undetectable to low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Lighter in body than American Standard with lower alcohol content and fewer calories. Typically, well-carbonated.

**Color: Light Straw to Straw 2 - 3 SRM**

**Bitterness: 5 – 15 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.5 – 4.4**

#### Subcategory B: American-Style Standard or Premium Lager

- **Appearance:** Color is very pale straw to pale gold. American Standard Lagers are typically lighter in color, while American Premium Lagers can have slightly more color ranging into gold tones. Bright without haze. Head formation is moderate, head retention is frequently weak.
- **Aroma:** Hops may be noticeable in low levels. Malt aroma is low. Slight acetaldehyde is okay but none is preferred. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** American Standard has low malt flavor. It may have a corn-like sweetness from the use of brewing adjuncts. American Premium may have slightly more malt flavor but it is still very low. Hop flavor and bitterness range from undetectable to low for both versions of the style.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light body, very clean and crisp, and well carbonated.
- **Note: Brewer must indicate on entry form whether the entry is an American-Style Standard or Premium Lager.**

**Color: Very Pale Straw to Pale Gold 2 - 6 SRM**

**Bitterness: 7 – 18 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.0**

#### Subcategory C: Latin American- or Tropical-Style Lager or Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is very light straw. Bright without haze. Head formation is moderate, head retention is frequently weak.
- **Aroma:** Very low levels of hop aroma. Malt aroma is low. Slight acetaldehyde is okay but none is preferred. No diacetyl and DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** They have very low levels of hop flavor and bitterness. Sugar adjuncts may be added to lighten the body and flavor of this beer, and may contribute a slight cidery character to the beer. A very low corn-like trait may be present. Hop flavor and bitterness range from undetectable to low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light bodied. Carbonation levels may be high in this style.
- **Note: The brewer MUST indicate on the entry form whether the entry is ale or lager.**

**Color: Straw 2-4 SRM**

**Bitterness: 5 – 15 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.6 – 5.3**

#### Subcategory D. American Style Pilsner or Hoppy Lager

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to light gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.

- **Aroma:** Bright, hop forward aroma. May be citrusy, juicy or floral in character; often with classic Noble hop character as well: spicy, herbal or perfume-like. Very subtle pale malt aroma, if any. No VDK, DMS or acetaldehyde. Ester profile is none to barely detectable.
- **Flavor:** A hop-forward overall character is the defining characteristic, with primarily citrusy, fruity, juicy or floral characteristics that may or may not be combined with more traditional Pilsner-like Noble hops. Malt profile should be similar to other classic examples of Pilsner: toasty and biscuit-like with little to no caramel character. These beers should be well attenuated with low residual extract – should not finish sweet.
- **Mouthfeel:** lean to medium-bodied. Well carbonated. No apparent astringency.
- **Overall:** This recently emerged style of beer marries the classic Pilsner attributes of clean snappy finish and flavorful drinkability with newer varieties of hops dosed at significantly higher levels than a traditional German or Bohemian Pilsner for a boost in hop flavor, aroma and bitterness while still maintaining a recognizable “Pilsner” character.

**Color: Straw to Light Gold**

**Bitterness: 35-50 IBU**

**Alcohol: 4.5-5.5% ABV**

## Category 2: European-Style Light Lagers

### Subcategory A: Helles (Heller) Lager

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to golden. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Low floral, spicy, herbal or earthy hops, notes of pale malt, and may have some biscuit, bready or toasted malt character at low levels. There may be very minimal notes of sulfur (H<sub>2</sub>S). There should be no diacetyl, DMS or esters.
- **Flavor:** Malty sweet taste with typically no caramel and very lightly toasted malt. A light caramel character is okay if present at very low levels. Hops are mild; just enough to balance the sweetness of the malt.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium body. Moderate alcohol & carbonation.

**Color: Straw to Golden 4 – 6 SRM**

**Bitterness: 16 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.3**

### Subcategory B: German-Style Pilsner

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to light gold. Bright without haze. The head should be dense, rich and stable.
- **Aroma:** Aroma is characterized by noble hops, pale, toasty malt, and a lack of fruity esters. Noble hop character can be defined as clean and floral with a spicy and/or herbal undertone. No diacetyl, but DMS may be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Low maltiness leading to a dry finish. Hop bitterness is medium to medium high with noble hop flavor.
- **Mouth Feel:** Well attenuated, medium-bodied, well carbonated beer.

**Color: Straw to Light Gold 3 - 4 SRM**

**Bitterness: 25 - 40 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.3**

### Subcategory C: Bohemian-Style Pilsner

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to light gold. Bright without haze. Head should be dense, rich and stable.

- **Aroma:** Noticeable floral, spicy, herbal or earthy hops aroma. Diacetyl and DMS should be below or near threshold levels. No esters.
- **Flavor:** Very noticeable spicy, herbal or earthy hops flavor. Slightly sweet malty balance with moderate to high, but not harsh, bitterness in the finish. A toasted, biscuit-like malt character may be evident with very light caramel flavors that enhance the malt profile.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium in body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Yellow to Light Gold 3 - 6 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory D: Dortmunder/Export**

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to deep gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Clean lager aroma. Hop aroma may be present at low levels. Toasty malt aromas are appropriate. No diacetyl or esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Fully attenuated beer style that results in a stronger beer than other German lagers with more malt character but should not be caramel-like. Hop flavor may be present at low to moderate levels. Medium low to medium high bitterness with emphasis on flavorful balance, a clean, snappy finish and high drinkability.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Yellow to Deep Gold 3 - 6 SRM**

**Bitterness: 22 – 32 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 6.0**

### **Category 3: Amber and Dark Lagers**

#### **Subcategory A: American-Style Amber Lager**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from copper to light brown. Bright without haze. Head formation is good, stability is fair.
- **Aroma:** Mild malty aromas, typically caramel-like in character. Low levels of floral or citrusy hops are appropriate. Slight acetaldehyde is okay but none is preferred. No esters, diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Floral hops may be evident with low to moderate bitterness. Crystal or caramel malt adds sweetness and flavor. Light examples should be specified by the brewer. These will have the same flavor and aroma profile but at lower levels.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Copper to Light Brown 6 - 16 SRM**

**Bitterness: 18 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.5 – 5.4**

#### **Subcategory B: Vienna-Style Lager**

- **Appearance:** Amber to reddish/copper in color. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Very mild hops direct the emphasis to malt. Noble-type hop aromas should be low, crisp and clean. No diacetyl or esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Vienna's toasty-like flavor is a by-product of the malt used. Caramel malt flavors are not appropriate. Slight malt sweetness. Noble-type hop flavors should be low, crisp and clean.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Reddish to Copper 3 - 9 SRM**

**Bitterness: 22 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.4**

### Subcategory C: Märzen-Oktoberfest Lager

- **Appearance:** Color is a deep gold to amber. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Malty aroma. Floral hop aroma can be low to none. No diacetyl or esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** This style of lager has a slightly higher alcohol level than other German-style lagers. Maltiness should dominate slightly over a clean, hop bitterness and should be toasty rather than strongly caramel. Floral hop flavor may be low to none.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Deep Gold to Amber 4 - 14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 18 - 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 5.9**

### Subcategory D: Munich-Style Dark

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from very deep amber to dark brown. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** This beer possesses a very malty nose. Cocoa-like and caramel character is appropriate. Low floral hops aromas are appropriate. There should be no diacetyl or esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** A distinct toasted, chocolate/cocoa-like or caramel character is appropriate. The accent is on the malt. Low hop flavor and bitterness.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Very Deep Amber to Dark Brown 16 - 20 SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.3**

### Subcategory E: Schwarzbier (Black Beer)

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from medium brown to very dark brown with garnet highlights. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Noble-type hop aroma should be low to medium. There should be no fruity esters or diacetyl perceived. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** This dark lager has a clean and somewhat neutral roasted malt character without the associated bitterness. Malt flavor should run the spectrum of toasty malt, caramel, and cocoa-like notes all in subtle balance. Hop bitterness is low to medium in character and should linger on the palate. Some slight residual sweetness is acceptable but not required. Noble-type hop flavor should be low to medium.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-light to a medium body, and moderate to moderately high carbonation. Smooth without harshness or astringency, despite the use of dark malts.

**Color: Medium Brown to Dark Brown 20 – 30+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 22 – 32 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.8 – 5.0**

## Category 4: Strong Lagers

### Subcategory A: Helles (Heller) Bock/Maibock

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Malty, with low to medium noble hop aroma. Although there should be no diacetyl, there may be low levels of esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** While possessing the same general characteristics of Bock, the Helles (Heller) version does not have the cocoa-like/chocolate character. It has a predominantly malty flavor that is toasty and can have a light caramel character. Hop flavor and bitterness is subdued, but adequate to balance the malt sweetness. Alcohol levels are high.



- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-full to full bodied. Well-carbonated.
- Color: Straw to Gold 4 - 10 SRM**  
**Bitterness: 20 – 35 IBU**  
**Alcohol: ABV 6.3 – 8.0**

### **Subcategory B: Traditional Bock**

- **Appearance:** Color is deep copper to dark brown. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Malt aroma dominates with “Munich,” toffee/caramel and cocoa/chocolate character. Hop aroma should be very low. Although there should be no diacetyl, there may be low levels of fruity esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Pronounced malty sweetness with just enough hops to balance the malt. Malt character typically includes toasty “Munich” notes, toffee, caramel, and cocoa/chocolate character. Noticeable residual malty sweetness and high alcohol. Hop flavor and bitterness should be low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium to full bodied and well-carbonated.

**Color: Deep Copper to Dark Brown 20 - 30 SRM**  
**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**  
**Alcohol: ABV 6.3 – 7.5**

### **Subcategory C: Doppelbock**

- **Appearance:** Color is dark amber to dark brown. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Low hops so that the entire emphasis is on malt. Malt aroma will have “Munich,” toffee/caramel and cocoa/chocolate character similar to Traditional Bock, but intensified. Alcohol evident. Although there should be no diacetyl, there may be low levels of esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** This is a stronger version of Bock but not twice as strong. It exhibits the same basic flavor profile and attributes, but intensified overall. Malt character typically includes toasty “Munich” notes, toffee, caramel, and cocoa/chocolate character. As with Traditional Bock, hop flavor should be low, and the bitterness just sufficient to balance the malt.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full-bodied to very full bodied and well-carbonated.

**Color: Dark Amber to Dark Brown 12 - 28 SRM**  
**Bitterness: 18 – 30 IBU**  
**Alcohol: ABV 7.0 – 9.0**

### **Subcategory D: Eisbock**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from amber to dark brown. Bright without haze. Head formation is good, but head retention may be compromised due to high alcohol levels.
- **Aroma:** Malt aroma similar to Doppelbock, but intensified and with evident alcohol as well. Hop aroma is negligible. Although there should be no diacetyl, there may be low levels of fruity esters. DMS should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** The strongest Bock, Eisbock is very malty and exhibits increased sweetness. Hops are added for balance, but very sparingly relative to the massive malt profile; the emphasis is on the malt. These beers are usually derived from Doppelbocks that have their alcohol level increased by freezing and removing the ice and are therefore similar in taste and aroma, with intensified flavors overall.
- **Mouth Feel:** Very full-bodied with alcoholic warmth. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Amber to Dark Brown 15 - 28 SRM**  
**Bitterness: 26 – 35 IBU**  
**Alcohol: ABV 8.5 – 14.0**

**Subcategory E: Baltic-Style Porter**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from dark brown to nearly opaque black, often with red highlights. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Noble or spicy hop aroma may be present but usually low. Clean lager profile overall, but with lager fruitiness not esters from warm fermentation. Caramel malt aromas dominate the aroma with toffee, nutty, licorice and dark fruit notes; complex alcohol aromas may be evident as well. No diacetyl or DMS.  
**Flavor:** Baltic Porters have a complex malt profile characterized by caramel and mild to moderate roast components (cocoa, chocolate, and coffee). A licorice-like character is often part of the flavor. Vinous, well-aged characters are also typical but not required. A moderate bitterness provides balance with residual sweetness. Although roasted malts are used to color and flavor this beer, there should be no roast harshness or astringency.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full-bodied, moderately carbonated, alcoholic warmth, no astringency.

**Color: Dark Brown to Black 24-30+SRM****Bitterness: 35 – 45 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 5.5 – 9.5****Ale Beer Styles****Category 5: Light Ales****Subcategory A: Cream Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from straw to pale yellow. Bright without haze. Head formation is moderate, head retention is frequently weak.
- **Aroma:** Hops may be noticeable in low levels but overall there is little or no hop aroma. A light grainy or pale malt aroma is appropriate. Some fruity aroma may be present. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Low malt flavor and at times a low sulfur character. The style may also have a corn-like sweetness from the use of brewing adjuncts. Hop flavor is very low to low. This style can be thought of as an ale-fermented version of American Standard or Premium Lager. Cream ale, traditionally made using a warm fermentation and cold lagering or blending, results in a very smooth, crisp and refreshing brew.
- **Mouth Feel:** This style is light in body with lively effervescence.

**Color: Straw to Pale Yellow 2 - 5 SRM****Bitterness: 7 – 22 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5****Subcategory B: Light Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from light straw to light gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Mild to moderate fruity esters, pale malt, with a balanced hop aroma that should be clean, smooth, mild and pleasant. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Light Ales are a variation of Golden Ales. While these are often all malt beers, the malt character is mainly that of pale base malt, with perhaps some very subtle light caramel or toasty/biscuit-like notes. Hops are at the brewer's discretion but should not overpower the delicate balance of this beer. The beer may be lightly dry hopped. Light Ales aim primarily for a clean, refreshing character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Lighter body than other American or British Ales. Alcohol levels should be restrained. Typically, well-carbonated

**Color: Light Straw to Light Gold 2-6 SRM****Bitterness: 10 – 20 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.0**

**Subcategory C: Golden or Blonde Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from straw to medium gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Low to moderate floral hop aroma. May also have herbal or mild sweet citrus notes. Resiny or aggressive hop character is not appropriate. Light to moderate pale malt aroma, may also have a slight grainy or very light caramel note. Low to moderate fruity esters are appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Some light malt sweetness with low to medium bitterness in the finish. The fruity esters may also contribute to the flavor balance but should not be overpowering.
- **Mouth Feel:** Crisp, dry, light to medium bodied beer. Typically, well-carbonated.

**Color: Straw to Medium Gold 3 – 8 SRM****Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5****Subcategory D: Kölsch**

- **Appearance:** Color is typically golden. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Low hop aroma. Mild fruity character. Pilsner-type malt aromas are appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Kölsch is characterized by a slightly dry, subtly sweet flavor and has low hop flavor. Mild fruitiness is typical for this style, tending towards a subtle white wine-like character. Wheat can be used in brewing, contributing a bread-like character. Fruity esters, while normally part of this style, should be subdued and in balance with the other flavor components. No caramel character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Low to medium body, well-carbonated.

**Color: Gold 3 – 5 SRM****Bitterness: 20 – 32 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.3****Subcategory E: English-Style Summer Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color is light straw to golden colored. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma can be floral/noble, or most typically, herbal and earthy. Piney, vegetal, dank, sharp or harsh hop character is not appropriate. Malt aroma is biscuit-like, cracker-like or toasty. Fruity ester characters are acceptable at low to moderate levels. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Medium-low to medium bitterness, and low to medium residual malt sweetness. Malt flavor is typically toasty and biscuit-like. Hop character, flavor and aroma are evident and may or may not be assertive yet always well balanced with malt character. The overall impression is refreshing.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium-light bodied. Mild carbonation is expected in draft versions, and bottled versions are normally lively.

**Color: Light Straw to Golden 3 – 10 SRM****Bitterness: 15 - 30 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5****Category 6: American-Style Wheat Ales**

These beers have a distinctive wheat profile. Filtered versions can be entered in either of the two “Wheat Ale” categories, according to color, and unfiltered versions can be appropriately entered in either of the “American Hefeweizen” categories, again according to color. Some American Wheat Ales have noticeable hopping, other do not. ***None of the beers in this category should have the phenolic banana/clove aroma of Bavarian wheat beers.***

### Subcategory A: American-Style Wheat Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from light gold to medium gold. They should have a long-lasting white head. Bright without haze.
- **Aroma:** A fruity aroma at low to medium levels is typical. Malt aromas are bread-like. Hop aroma ranges from none to moderate. Hop character, if present, can be floral, herbal/spicy or citrus-like but always in balance with the overall beer. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** A light to moderately strong grainy wheat flavor should be perceived. Hop rates may be low to medium and can have either a citrus, spicy, or floral noble hop character. A fruity flavor at low to medium levels is typical.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body should be light to medium. They are generally light, refreshing, balanced and very drinkable. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Light Gold to Medium Gold 3 – 12 SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 - 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5**

### Subcategory B: American-Style Hefeweizen

- **Appearance:** Typically served with yeast, it should appear hazy to very cloudy. Color is usually straw to light amber. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Yeast aroma should be low to medium but not overpowering the balance and character of malt and hops. A fruity aroma at low to medium levels is typical. Malt aromas are bread-like. Hop aroma ranges from none to moderate. Hop character, if present, can be floral, herbal/spicy or citrus-like but always in balance with the overall beer. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** This beer can be made using either ale or lager yeast, but is essentially an unfiltered version of American-Style Wheat Ale. Yeast flavor should be low to medium. Hop rates may be low to medium and can have either a citrus, spicy, or floral noble hop character. There is a higher perceived bitterness than in other wheat beers. Diacetyl should not be perceived.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body should be light to medium in character, but should have slightly more texture than American Wheat Ales due to the suspended yeast. A small amount of yeast bite/astringency is expected when in balance with the rest of the beer. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Straw to Light Amber 3 – 10 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 – 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5**

### Subcategory C: American-Style Dark Wheat Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is amber to brown. They should have a long-lasting white head. Bright without haze.
- **Aroma:** A fruity aroma at low to medium levels is typical. Hop aroma ranges from none to moderate. Hop character, if present, can be floral, herbal/spicy or citrus-like but always in balance with the overall beer. Malt aromas of light cocoa and/or caramel are appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** A light to moderately strong grainy wheat flavor should be perceived with notes of caramel and mild cocoa. Hop rates may be low to medium and can have either a citrus American or a spicy or floral noble hop character.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body should be light to medium. They are generally refreshing, balanced and very drinkable, with a bit more complexity from the darker malts. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Amber to Brown 8 – 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 - 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5**

### Subcategory D: American-Style Dark Hefeweizen

- **Appearance:** Typically served with yeast, it will appear hazy to very cloudy. Color is amber to brown. Head formation and retention is good.

- **Aroma:** Yeast aroma should be low to medium but not overpowering the balance and character of malt and hops. A fruity aroma at low to medium levels is typical. Hop aroma ranges from none to moderate. Hop character, if present, can be floral, herbal/spicy or citrus-like but always in balance with the overall beer. Malt aromas of light cocoa and/or caramel are appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** This beer can be made using either ale or lager yeast, but is essentially an unfiltered version of American-Style Dark Wheat Ale. They exhibit roasted malt flavor with a low level of roast malt astringency balanced with malt sweetness and a cocoa/chocolate or caramel character. Hop character, can be floral, herbal/spicy or citrus-like but always in balance with the overall beer. Yeast flavor should be low to medium but not overpowering the balance and character of malt and hops.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body should be light to medium, but should have slightly more texture than American Dark Wheat Ales due to the suspended yeast. A small amount of yeast bite/astringency is expected when in balance with the rest of the beer. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Amber to Brown 8 – 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 – 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.5**

## Category 7: Pale Ales

### Subcategory A: American-Style Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** The color ranges from medium yellow to copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma is evident and characterized by citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine typically from American varietal hops. Moderate esters are appropriate. A low malt aroma of base malt is typical; there may also be a subtle light caramel note. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** American Pale Ale features the generous use of American style hops. Medium to high hopping rates are evident. It may also have some residual sweetness and caramel notes, but the main malt flavor of this style is the base malt itself. Moderate to strong fruity flavors are appropriate. Bitterness is assertive without being harsh or dominating.
- **Mouth Feel:** American Pale Ales have medium body, with moderate to moderately high carbonation levels.

**Color: Medium Yellow to Copper 5 - 14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 35 – 50 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5**

### Subcategory B: English-Style Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from gold to deep copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** The hop aroma should exhibit classic English character: floral, earthy, herbal, fruity, and even spicy. A biscuit-like malt aroma with a low caramel character may be present with fruity esters that are moderate to strong. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS.
- **Flavor:** Hoppy and well attenuated with a dry, biscuit-like malt character at low to moderate levels. Low caramel character may be present with fruity ester flavors and aromas that are moderate to strong. Medium to high hopping rates are evident. Bitterness is assertive without being harsh or dominating.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-bodied, with low to moderate carbonation levels.

**Color: Gold to Deep Copper 5 - 14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5**

**Subcategory C: American-Style Strong Pale Ale**

- **Appearance:** The color ranges from golden to copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** The hop aroma is assertive, characterized by citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine and typically derived from American-varietal hops. Aroma combines big hops with fruity esters. Malt aroma is in the background, and may have slight caramel notes. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** American Strong Pale Ale is an offshoot of the American Pale Ale style but follows the American axiom “some is good, more is better”. It is a category to fill the gap between American Pale Ale and American IPA, and many examples of this style are actually marketed as IPAs. Flavor profile exhibits low maltiness and low caramel with moderate to strong fruity esters and higher alcoholic strength. Assertive hop bitterness and flavor and are well-attenuated.
- **Mouth Feel:** They exhibit a medium body with moderate to moderately high carbonation levels.

**Color: Golden to Copper 5 - 16 SRM****Bitterness: 45 – 60 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 5.5 – 6.5****Category 8: India Pale Ales****Subcategory A: Session-Style India Pale Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from medium yellow to copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Assertive hop and low to moderate fruity ester aromas. Assertive hop aroma is characterized by citrus, floral, resin, melon, or sweet pine. Although brewed primarily with American hops, other hop varieties are acceptable. Hop aroma should dominate. Low background malt and fruity esters. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Hop flavor is the dominant trait of this beer. Session IPA is very assertively hopped with primarily American hops, although hops of other origins can be effectively used as well. A strong hop flavor is expected as well as a medium high hop bitterness. Low density original extract necessary for producing this style frequently results in malt character that is overwhelmed by the hop profile. The best examples of this style have a low to moderate level of balancing malt flavor from the base malt. Caramel malt flavors should be low; ester character can be moderate.
- **Mouthfeel:** Light to medium bodied with moderately high carbonation.

**Color: Medium Yellow to Copper 5-16 SRM****Bitterness: 35-50 IBU****Alcohol ABV: 3-4.5%****Subcategory B: Hazy or New England-Style India Pale Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to gold or even orange. A hazy appearance is typical for this style, whether from suspended yeast, unconverted starch, chill haze or other sources. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Bright, fruity, “juicy” hop aroma and moderate to very strong fruity ester aromas are distinguishing traits of this beer style. The assertive hop aroma is characterized by fruity, tropical, bright and juicy characteristics using hops from a variety of origins. Aroma intensity should be high. Background malt aromas are appropriate. Mild grainy character or subtle yeastiness is okay. No diacetyl, DMS or autolysis. Classic “C hop” aroma--citrus, evergreen, pine--is acceptable, but is not common in these beers and should be secondary to tropical and fruity hop character.
- **Flavor:** While this version of IPA has a pronounced hop aroma and flavor, the hop bitterness is moderate, especially compared to classic American IPA. Fruity and tropical hop flavor should be high. Malt flavor leans toward toasty base malt with bread-like flavors. These beers often use wheat or oats to assist in the development of malt/grain flavor and visual haziness. Fruity ester flavors are strong to very strong. Medium maltiness provides balance to the aromatic hop character. Moderate to well-attenuated residual extract leads to a characteristic softness in the finish which may or may not have evident bitterness.

- **Mouth Feel:** Soft, rounded mouthfeel can also be described as creamy. The use of high protein malts is common in these beers, giving them a medium-full to full mouthfeel even when malt flavor is subdued. Should not have a chalky or mineral-like character. A light hop-derived astringency is acceptable; however, this should never come across as harsh. Moderate to moderately high carbonation levels.

**Color: Yellow to Orange, not bright 6 - 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 50 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.5 – 7.0**

### Subcategory C: English-Style India Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is pale gold to deep copper. Cold haze is allowable. Head retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Full, floral hop aroma and moderate to very strong fruity ester aromas. Assertive hop aroma is characterized by classic English character: floral, earthy, herbal, fruity, and even spicy. Aroma intensity should be moderately high to high. An underlying malt aroma, secondary to the hop aromas but more prominent than in American IPA, should have a toasty, biscuit-like and/or slight caramel character. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS.
- **Flavor:** The two most distinguishing traits of this beer are the hops and alcohol. These should both be very noticeable. Fruity with strong earthy, herbal and even spicy hop flavor and hop bitterness. Fruity ester flavors are moderate to very strong. Medium maltiness provides balance to the rich hop character, and they are well-attenuated with a clean, snappy, bitter, dry finish.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, with moderately low to moderate carbonation levels.

**Color: Pale Gold to Deep Copper 6 - 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 50 – 70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 7.5**

### Subcategory D: American-Style India Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is pale gold to deep copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Full, floral hop aroma and moderate to very strong fruity ester aromas. Assertive hop aroma is characterized by citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine typically from American varietal hops. Aroma intensity should be high. Background malt aromas are appropriate, and may have low caramel notes. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** The two most distinguishing traits of this beer are the hops and alcohol. These should both be very noticeable. Very assertively hopped, the hop character is distinctly American with citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine notes. A strong hop flavor and bitterness is appropriate. Fruity ester flavors are moderate to very strong. Low to medium maltiness to provide balance to the rich hop character, they are well-attenuated with a clean, snappy, bitter, dry finish.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, with moderate to moderately high carbonation levels.

**Color: Pale Gold to Deep Copper 6 - 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 60 – 85 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 7.5**

### Subcategory E: Belgian-Style India Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** Belgian-Style IPAs have an appearance like that of American or English IPAs.
- **Aroma:** Pronounced hoppy aroma using any variety or origin of hops; however, most examples in the US are produced with citrusy American hops. Malt aromas are subtle and similar to American or English IPAs. Fruity, earthy, spicy and/or phenolic yeast-driven aromas are the main differentiating factor in a Belgian-style IPA. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** The two most distinguishing traits of this beer are the hops and alcohol. These should both be very noticeable. Very assertively hopped; hop character can reflect hops of any style or origin: citrusy, sweet pine, resinous, earthy, floral, spicy,

fruity, or herbal. A strong hop flavor and bitterness is appropriate. Fruity-ester flavors are moderate to very strong. Low to medium maltiness to provide balance to the rich hop character, and are well-attenuated with a clean, snappy, bitter, dry finish. Belgian fruity/spicy/phenolic yeast character is expected as part of the overall flavor balance.

- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, with moderately high to high carbonation levels.

**Color: Pale Gold to Deep Copper 6 - 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 55-85 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 - 7.5**

### **Subcategory F: Double or Imperial India Pale Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from gold to amber. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Full, floral hop aroma and strong to very strong fruity ester aromas. Assertive, strong hop aroma is characterized by citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine typically from American varietal hops. Aroma intensity should be high to very high. Malt aroma of pale malt is appropriate; can be toasty and/or slightly caramel. No diacetyl or DMS
- **Flavor:** This style is the big brother of American IPA. It should share all the characteristics of American IPA but have more overall. It has intense flavor, bitterness, and aroma of hops without being harsh. The high hop intensity should be balanced with malt character and complex alcohol flavors. No complex oxidation products from aging, such as dark fruits, should be present.
- **Mouth Feel:** The alcohol should be higher than American IPA. Body is medium high to full.

**Color: Gold to Amber 6 - 18 SRM**

**Bitterness: 75 - 100 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 8.0 – 11.0**

## **Category 9: Amber Ales**

### **Subcategory A: Ordinary Bitter/ Best Bitter**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from gold to copper. Some chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation may be small, head retention is fair.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma may be evident. Malt aroma should be cracker-like or biscuit-like, and may have caramel or toffee notes. Fruity ester character is medium. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS.
- **Flavor:** It has medium bitterness, and low to medium malt sweetness. Hop flavor and character may be evident. In traditional form, fruity ester character is acceptable and it may exhibit notes of marmalade. Special Bitter has a more robust malt character than Ordinary Bitter, and usually higher hopping rates. The hops should exhibit classic English character; floral, earthy, herbal, fruity, and even spicy.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium body with mild carbonation.

**Color: Gold to Copper 8 - 14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU / 25 – 40 IBU (ESB)**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.0 – 3.8 / 4.1 – 4.8 (ESB)**

### **Subcategory B: Strong Bitter ESB (Extra Special)**

- **Appearance:** Color is gold to copper. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma should be at moderate to high intensity. Malt aroma should be crackery or biscuit-like, and may have caramel or toffee notes. Fruity ester character is moderate to moderately high. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS.
- **Flavor:** Medium to strong hop qualities in aroma, flavor, and bitterness. More robust malt character than Special Bitter with moderate sweetness and caramel or toffee notes. Bitterness is medium to medium high. Fruity ester flavors are moderate to moderately high. In traditional form, it



may exhibit notes of marmalade. The hops should exhibit classic English character; floral, earthy, herbal, fruity, and even spicy.

- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body with mild carbonation.

**Color: Gold to Copper 8 - 14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 35 – 55 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.8**

### Subcategory C: Scottish-Style Light

- **Appearance:** Lightest in color of the Scottish Ales, it is light amber to light brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. Head formation may be small, head retention is fair.
- **Aroma:** Very low to negligible hop aroma. Malt aromas can have a toasty, biscuit-like, caramel or toffee character. Esters should be subdued. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS. Hydrogen sulfide should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Malt flavor is biscuity, toasty and caramel-like. Hop bitterness is low and hop flavor is negligible. Fruity flavors are minimal. While there is no evidence that traditional Scottish Ales had any smoke character, modern market examples can exhibit some smoke or peat flavors and aromas, but these should be very subtle. **Beers with higher levels of smoke character should be entered in smoked beer categories.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Light body, low alcohol, moderate carbonation.

**Color: Light Amber to Light Brown 9 - 18 SRM**

**Bitterness: 9 – 20 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.8 – 3.8**

### Subcategory D: Scottish-Style Heavy

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from golden amber to deep brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. Head formation may be small, head retention is fair.
- **Aroma:** Very low to negligible hop aroma. Malt aromas can have a toasty, biscuit-like, caramel or toffee character and be higher in intensity than Scottish Light. Esters should be subdued. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS. Hydrogen sulfide should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** While this is a bigger beer than the Scottish Light and has a bigger malt profile, Scottish-Style Heavy is still a relatively light-bodied, low alcohol beer. Malt flavor is biscuity, toasty and caramel-like. Hop bitterness is low but perceptible; hop flavor is negligible. Fruity flavors are minimal. While there is no evidence that traditional Scottish Ales had any smoke character, modern market examples can exhibit some smoke or peat flavors and aromas, but these should be very subtle. **Beers with higher levels of smoke character should be entered in smoked beer categories.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-light body, moderate alcohol, moderate carbonation.

**Color: Golden Amber to Deep Brown 10 - 19 SRM**

**Bitterness: 12 – 20 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.5 – 4.5**

### Subcategory E: Scottish-Style Export

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from golden amber to deep brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. Head formation may be small, but head retention is good.
- **Aroma:** No hop aroma should present but a low to moderate fruity ester character may be detectable. Malt aromas can have a toasty, biscuit-like, caramel or toffee character and be higher in intensity than Scottish Heavy. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS. Hydrogen sulfide should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** This is the richest and most full-flavored of the session-strength Scottish Ales with the most malt character short of a Wee Heavy. It is, however, not a heavy-bodied or high alcohol beer, and should not approach Wee Heavy strength in flavor intensity, mouthfeel, or alcohol level. Malt flavor is biscuity, toasty, caramel-like or toffee-like. Hop bitterness is low but perceptible; hop flavor is negligible. Fruity flavors are minimal. While there is no evidence that traditional Scottish Ales

had any smoke character, modern market examples can exhibit some smoke or peat flavors and aromas, but these should be very subtle. **Beers with higher levels of smoke character should be entered in smoked beer categories.**

- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, moderate alcohol, moderate carbonation.

**Color: Golden Amber to Deep Brown 10 – 19 SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.0**

### Subcategory F: Irish-Style Red Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from light copper to light brown in color. Chill haze is acceptable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma may be absent, but may also range from low to moderate in intensity. Floral, herbal or noble hops are appropriate. Low to moderate levels of fruity esters are appropriate. Malt aroma should have toffee, caramel, and toasty notes. Diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels; no DMS.
- **Flavor:** Low to medium caramel sweetness with medium hop bitterness and flavor. They may have low to moderate levels of fruity ester flavor.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, moderate carbonation.

**Color: Light Copper to Light Brown 10 – 19 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5**

### Subcategory G: Altbier

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from copper to brown. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good
- **Aroma:** Fruity-esters are low to medium-low. Noble hops are characteristic; intensity ranges from low to high. Malt aromas of Pilsner, Vienna and/or Munich malts are appropriate. Slight caramel notes are also okay. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** This malty German-style ale can be hoppy and somewhat bittersweet. Noble hop character is well balanced with malt flavor. Malt character is toasty, with light caramel, nutty or cocoa notes. Although a malty beer, Alt should present a crisp, clean, snappy finish.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium bodied, well-carbonated.

**Color: Copper to Brown 10 - 20 SRM**

**Bitterness: 25 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 5.5**

### Subcategory H: American-Style Amber Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from copper to light brown. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Assertive hop aroma is characterized by citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine typically from American varietal hops. Caramel malt aromas should be evident as well. Fruity-esters are moderate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** American hops - citrus, floral, resin, or sweet pine - emerge in the bitterness, and flavor, particularly in the bitterness. Medium to high maltiness is evident with a distinct caramel character. Finish has a balance of hop bitterness and caramel character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-bodied with moderate carbonation.

**Color: Copper to Light Brown 8 - 18 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.4 – 6.0**

### Subcategory I: Double/Imperial Red Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from deep amber to dark copper. Chill haze allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** An intense aroma balanced between American hop character and caramel malt is characteristic. Hop aromas can be citrusy, floral, resinous or piney. Esters are medium to high in intensity. Dark fruit aromas are not typical for this style, as this beer is intended to be served fresh. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** These are big examples of American Amber Ales with intense hop flavor and bitterness. Though the hop character is intense it's balanced with alcohol flavors, moderate to high fruity esters, and medium to high caramel malt character. Hops should not be harsh. Imperial Red Ales are differentiated from Imperial IPA's by caramel flavor and color. They are differentiated from Barley Wines by freshness; these beers do not have the products of oxidation from aging.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full-bodied. Alcohol content is very high and of notable character. Moderately carbonated.

**Color: Deep Amber to Dark Copper 10 – 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 55 – 85 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.8 – 10.5**

## **Category 10: Brown and Black Ales**

### Subcategory A: English-Style Mild Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is light amber to dark brown. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures.
- **Aroma:** There is little to no hop aroma. Esters are moderate to moderately high for this low-strength ale. Malt aroma can have toasty, caramel or cocoa-like notes. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Mild Ales are low alcohol beers designed to quench a thirst. The style is sweeter than other English ales with a flavor as malty as possible in a low alcohol beer. There is very little hop bitterness. Darker examples may have more malt complexity with notes of caramel, roast and licorice.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body is light to medium-light, carbonation is mild to moderate.

**Color: Light Amber to Dark Brown 15 - 35 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 – 24 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.2 – 4.5**

### Subcategory B: English-Style Brown Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is medium copper to medium brown with garnet highlights. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures.
- **Aroma:** Low to very little hop aroma. Lack of hop aroma is okay. Malt aromas are caramel-like and cocoa-like. Fruity esters are appropriate. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Ales in this category are sweeter and more full-bodied than Mild Ales and might be thought of as a Mild's big brother. The flavor presents with a hint of chocolate and low hops. The overall emphasis is on the malt with possible notes of roast and fruitiness.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-bodied, carbonation is mild to moderate.

**Color: Medium Copper to Medium Brown 20 - 30 SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 5.9**

### Subcategory C: American-Style Brown Ale

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from deep copper to brown. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.

- **Aroma:** Moderately assertive hop aroma. A floral or sweet citrus hop character is typical. Malt nose of cocoa, caramel, and biscuit. Medium-low to medium fruity esters. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** This style, as compared to English Brown Ale has increased malt, alcohol, extract, and hop character. It is a balanced beer with moderately assertive hop bitterness. The flavor features cocoa, caramel, and may have low biscuit malt character married with a floral or sweet citrus hop flavor. Fruity ester characters should be subdued.
- **Mouth Feel:** The body is medium to medium full, typically well-carbonated.

**Color: Deep Copper to Brown 25 - 35 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 6.3**

### Subcategory D: Brown Porter

- **Appearance:** Color is medium brown to deep brown with reddish tones. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Fruity esters and low hop aroma are acceptable. Malt aromas are cocoa-like and caramel-like. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Malty with an emphasis on sweet caramel/toffee and chocolate-like character. Hops are low and restrained, just enough to balance the sweetness. No sharp roast or coffee notes should be apparent.
- **Mouth Feel:** Brown Porters are lighter than Robust Porters with low to medium body. Carbonation is moderate to well-carbonated.

**Color: Medium to Deep Brown 30 - 45 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.4 – 5.9**

### Subcategory E: Robust Porter

- **Appearance:** Color is deep brown with red hues. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Coffee-like malt aroma. Cocoa- and caramel-like malt characters are also typical. Hop aroma ranges from low to medium high. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** A balanced beer with a dry, coffee-like malty flavor. Chocolate and black malts add bitterness without burnt malt or charcoal notes. Cocoa- and caramel-like flavors are typical but with more balancing hop character than in Brown Porter. Hop flavor ranges from medium-low to medium-high. Fruity esters may be evident, balanced with roast malt and hop bitterness.
- **Mouth Feel:** This style has medium to full body. Carbonation is moderate to well-carbonated.

**Color: Deep Brown 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 6.5**

### Subcategory F: Cascadian Style Dark Ale /American Black Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is deep brown to black. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Pronounced hop aroma ranges from medium high to high in intensity, and can exhibit hop character that is floral, herbal, earthy, spicy, resinous, but most commonly citrusy. Fruity esters are part of the aroma profile, and should blend with the hop character. A subtle to moderate cocoa-like roastiness is often part of the aroma profile, but no roast aroma is also okay.
- **Flavor:** A hop-forward beer with a pronounced hop flavor and bitterness. Malt character is lighter than the color would suggest, often with cocoa-like notes but no heavy caramel or roast character. Bitterness is assertive, ranging from medium-high to very high. Overall, the flavor should be reminiscent of IPA with a bit more malt complexity
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body in keeping with the evolution of this style as an IPA with color malts added. Alcoholic warmth in the finish is okay, but should not be a dominant character

**Color: Deep Brown to Black 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 50-70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 7.5**

### **Subcategory G: Dry Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color is brown/garnet to opaque dark brown/black. Dry Stout characteristically has excellent foam stability.
- **Aroma:** There are no noticeable hop aromas. Esters are at a moderate level. Malt aromas are roasty, with cocoa, coffee and caramel notes. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** Sometimes called Irish Stout, dry stout is not a heavy beer; its distinguishing feature is the use of roasted barley for a slightly roasted coffee and light caramel flavor. Fruity esters are minimal. Diacetyl should be very low or not perceived. There are no noticeable hop flavors. Burnt-roast malt flavor characterizes the finish. Some slight, low, sour-lactic character is allowable at a background level.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium in body and alcohol. Carbonation is moderate.

**Color: Brown with Garnet to Opaque Dark Brown or Black 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 40 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.5 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory H: Sweet Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color is deep brown/garnet to opaque dark brown/black. Sweet stouts are sometimes a shade lighter in color than other stouts. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** There are no noticeable hop aromas. Malt aromas are of cocoa and caramel, without strong coffee-like or burnt notes. Moderate esters are typical. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** Also called Milk Stout, because it may be sweetened with lactose (milk sugar), Sweet Stout has a sweeter, more chocolate- or caramel-like flavor than Dry Stout. Hop bitterness is low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body, moderate carbonation.

**Color: Deep Red-Brown to Opaque Brown or Black 30 - 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 15 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.1 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory I: Oatmeal Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color is brown with hues of garnet to opaque dark brown/black. Head retention is excellent.
- **Aroma:** There are no noticeable hop aromas. Malt aromas are of cocoa, caramel, coffee, and roast. Moderate ester profile. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Oatmeal stouts are typically softer and sweeter than either Dry Stout or Foreign Stout, but will display similar malt and roast character. Hops provide balancing bitterness without adding much flavor.
- **Mouth Feel:** Silky/creamy mouth feel from the addition of oats to the grist. Some astringency from the use of oats may be present at low levels. Moderate carbonation.

**Color: Brown with Garnet to Opaque Dark Brown or Black 30 - 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 - 40 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.8 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory J: Foreign-Style Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color is opaque black with brown/garnet highlights possible. Head retention is excellent.

- **Aroma:** Roasted malt aromas (cocoa, coffee, caramel) and fruity esters are appropriate but not hop aroma. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** This is a stronger version of Dry Stout with additional malt and hops. Foreign-Style stouts exhibit malt sweetness and caramel flavor with a distinctive dry-roasted bitterness in the finish with coffee-like roasted barley. Diacetyl should be negligible or not perceived but no diacetyl is preferred.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-full to full bodied. Moderate carbonation.

**Color: Opaque Black 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 40 – 55 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 7.5**

### **Subcategory K: American-Style Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color is opaque black with brown/garnet highlights possible. Head retention is excellent.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma may be moderate to high with American citrusy, floral and/or resinous hop character. Roasted malt aromas (cocoa, coffee, caramel) and fruity esters are appropriate in balance with hop character. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** This beer is a version of Foreign Stout with the same malt character, mouth feel and color, plus evident hop flavor, aroma and bitterness. Low to medium malt sweetness with a degree of caramel, chocolate and/or roasted coffee flavor with a roasted bitterness. Hop bitterness and flavor may be moderate to high with American citrusy, floral and/or resinous hop character. The bitterness profile overlaps with Foreign Stout and may be higher.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-full to full bodied. Moderate carbonation. Low levels of astringency are okay.

**Color: Opaque Black 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 45 – 65 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.6 – 8.8**

### **Subcategory L: Imperial Stout**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from brown to black. Head retention can sometimes be compromised by the high alcohol content.
- **Aroma:** The aroma is balanced with assertive hopping and fruity esters. Hop aroma can be moderate to high, with floral, citrus or herbal characteristics. Malt aromas of coffee, dark chocolate and/or even slightly burnt/charred character are appropriate. No DMS, diacetyl below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Imperial Stout is differentiated from Foreign Stout by even higher levels of hops and alcohol than other styles. It can be extremely rich, with malty, currant-like or dark fruit flavor. Bitterness can be moderate to high, but balanced. Roasted malt astringency and bitterness can be moderate. Milder versions are ready to drink fresh and stronger versions benefit from maturation.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full-bodied, with medium-low to moderate carbonation

**Color: Brown to Black 22 - 35+ SRM**

**Bitterness: 50 – 80 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.0 – 12.0**

## **Category 11: Strong Ales**

### **Subcategory A: Scotch Ale (Wee Heavy)**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from deep copper to brown. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation is good, but retention is often compromised.
- **Aroma:** No noticeable hop aromas. Extremely malty aroma: toasty, biscuit-like, and complex, deep caramel characters. Esters are low to moderate for a beer of this strength due to yeast selection and low fermentation temperatures. Some subtle smoke or peat aromas are acceptable. Scotch Ales are often stored and present a range of attributes from aging: dark fruit, deep caramel, toffee or even molasses. No DMS, and diacetyl should be below or near threshold.

- **Flavor:** Scotch Ale is the strongest ale style to originate in Scotland, and can be thought of as a Scottish equivalent to Barleywine. Scotch Ales are lightly hopped, with the emphasis on a very malty, caramel-like, full-bodied beer with a noticeable alcohol presence. Hop flavors should be low to none. While there is no evidence that traditional Scotch Ales had any smoke character, modern market examples can exhibit some smoke or peat flavors, but these should be very subtle. Higher smoke character beers should be entered in smoked beer. Aged examples will exhibit products of maturation; these should enhance the basic aroma and flavor profile of the beer. Oxidation that presents as papery, cardboard-like or otherwise unpleasant, is not appropriate.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full-bodied, with a silky, rounded texture. Moderate carbonation.

**Color: Deep Copper to Brown 20 - 30 SRM**

**Bitterness: 25 – 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.5 – 9.0**

### **Subcategory B: English-Style Old Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from copper to medium brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. Head formation is modest, and retention is often weak.
- **Aroma:** Well-aged malty, caramel aromas with positive aging and oxidation characters are typical and desirable, often with sherry- or port-like notes. Hop aroma is usually negligible as a result of prolonged aging. Aromas of dark or dried fruits are typical and appropriate: raisins, dates, figs, plums, prunes, etc. No DMS, and diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** Characteristics of this beer include a nutty quality and malty sweetness. They also typically have a fruity nature. Hopping may be assertive, but the perceived bitterness is often masked by residual sugars and products of maturation. With oxidation it can take on a vinous, sherry, port-like character. Oak aged character is acceptable when subtle. **Higher levels of oak-aged character should be entered in the wood- and barrel-aged category.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium to full body. Alcohol is not as strong as Barley Wine. Mild to moderate carbonation.

**Color: Copper to Medium Brown 10 - 20 SRM**

**Bitterness: 30 – 50 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.0 – 9.5**

### **Subcategory C: American-Style Strong Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color is copper to medium brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Floral or citrusy hop aroma, noticeable fruity esters, caramel, toasted malts. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Hopping is assertive but the perceived bitterness may be tempered by residual sugars and/or intense malt flavor. Oxidation is not part of this style; these strong Ales are meant to be served fresh.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium to full body. Alcohol is not as strong as Barley Wine. Moderate carbonation to well-carbonated.

**Color: Copper to Medium Brown 10 - 20 SRM**

**Bitterness: 50 – 70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.5 – 10.0**

### **Subcategory D: English-Style Barley Wine**

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from tawny copper to dark brown in color. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation can be moderate to good, but retention is often compromised.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma may be minimal to medium with evident ester and alcohol aroma. Hop aroma, if present, is typically floral, herbal, earthy or spicy. Citrusy, resinous or piney aromas are not characteristic. Malt aromas of caramel, toffee, toasted bread or biscuits are characteristic. Oxidation products of dark or dried fruit, molasses, brown sugar, toasted marshmallow are all appropriate. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** Barley Wines and "Strong" or "Old" ales share many common traits. They are both strong and full bodied and characterized by evident alcohol and high residual malty sweetness. They both

have hops that diminish during cellaring (aging) and are therefore predominately malty in flavor.

The flavor in Barley Wines is complex and can include qualities described anywhere from prunes, nutty, biscuit, to woody and dark fruit esters. Hop flavor may be minimal to medium.

- **Mouth Feel:** Full bodied with evident alcohol warming. Mild to moderate carbonation.

**Color: Tawny Copper to Dark Brown 12 - 22 SRM**

**Bitterness: 35 – 55 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 9.0 – 13.5**

### Subcategory E: American-Style Barley Wine

- **Appearance:** Color is tawny copper to dark brown color. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is moderate to good.
- **Aroma:** Hop aroma can be floral, citrusy, herbal, resinous, or piney at medium to very high levels. Notes of caramel and/or toffee are characteristic. No DMS, and diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** American Barley Wines differ from the English in the character and intensity of hop aromas, flavors, and bitterness. These should be medium to assertive. American Barley Wines have a less complex malt character than English Barley Wines. They exhibit caramel and/or toffee flavor. Complexity comes from the interplay of malt, hops and caramel flavors that develop with age i.e. sherry and papery note.
- **Mouth Feel:** Full bodied with evident alcohol warming. Moderate carbonation to well-carbonated.

**Color: Tawny Copper to Dark Brown 12 - 22 SRM**

**Bitterness: 50+ IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 9.0 – 14.0**

## Category 12: Continental-Style Wheat Ales

### Subcategory A: Berliner-Style Weisse

- **Appearance:** Color is pale straw to yellow. A very thick, white head is characteristic. These beers can be hazy. Head formation is initially very good, but stability and retention is usually poor.
- **Aroma:** Noble hop character ranges from low to none with a light to moderate wheat aroma. Sour or tart aromas are typical. No diacetyl or DMS should be present.
- **Flavor:** Moderate lactic character and fruity esters in both flavor and aroma. A bread-like or grainy flavor of wheat is in the background, as is a slightly sweet Pilsner malt character. Bitterness is low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light bodied and highly carbonated. Low alcohol.

**Color: Pale Straw to Yellow 2- 8 SRM**

**Bitterness: 5 - 15 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 4.0**

### Subcategory B: Belgian-Style Wit (White)

- **Appearance:** Color ranges from very pale straw to light yellow. These very pale beers are often bottle conditioned and served cloudy. A very thick, white head is characteristic.
- **Aroma:** Low to medium fruity ester level. Orange and coriander should be at subtle to moderate levels. Some mild phenolic character is okay, but if present, should be more of a cinnamon or nutmeg character than a clove-like or smoky character. Malt aroma is bread-like, wheat-like or even slightly grainy. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Belgian White Ales are brewed using un-malted wheat and malted barley and are lightly spiced with coriander and orange peel. The style is further characterized by the use of noble-type hops to achieve a low to medium bitterness and hop flavor. Mild acidity is appropriate. Low levels of appropriate, phenolic character are acceptable.
- **Mouth Feel:** Low to medium body. This style should give the impression of a highly drinkable session beer. Highly carbonated.

**Color: Pale Straw to Light Yellow 2 – 4 SRM**



**Bitterness: 10 – 20 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.3**

### **Subcategory C: Kristall Weizen**

- **Appearance:** Kristall Weizen is a filtered version of Hefeweizen. Color ranges from straw to gold. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is excellent.
- **Aroma:** Fruity and phenolic, with a clove-banana character. A bready/grainy malt aroma is typical. No diacetyl or DMS should be present.
- **Flavor:** Fruity and phenolic. The phenolic characteristics are often described as clove- or nutmeg-like and can be smoky or even vanilla-like. Low hop level, and hop bitterness is low.
- **Mouth Feel:** It lacks the full mouth feel of the Hefeweizen because the beer has been filtered, and yeast is not present. Well attenuated and very highly carbonated. Light to medium-bodied beer.

**Color: Straw to Gold 3 - 9 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 - 16 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.9 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory D: Bavarian-Style Hefeweizen**

- **Appearance:** Unfiltered and uses a high percentage of wheat so it typically is hazy to very cloudy. The color ranges from straw to gold. Head formation and retention is excellent.
- **Aroma:** Clove-banana character. A bready/grainy malt aroma is typical. No diacetyl or DMS should be present.
- **Flavor:** The flavor of a Weissbier with yeast is decidedly fruity and phenolic. The phenolic characteristics are often described as clove- or nutmeg-like and can be smoky or even vanilla-like. These beers have a low hop level and therefore hop bitterness is low.
- **Mouth Feel:** Well attenuated and very highly carbonated. It is a light to medium-bodied beer. Weissbier is often served after rousing the yeast, so yeast bite, yeast astringency and some additional texture from the roused sediment can be part of the style
- **Note: Brewer may indicate on the bottle whether the yeast should be intentionally roused.**

**Color: Straw to Gold 3 - 8 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 - 20 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.9 – 5.5**

### **Subcategory E: Dunkelweizen/Weizen Bock**

- **Appearance:** Dunkelweizen color ranges from copper to dark brown; weizen bock yellow to brown in color. May be bright or cloudy. Head formation and retention is good to excellent.
- **Aroma:** Notes of banana esters are common. Phenolic aromas of clove or nutmeg are typical and highly appropriate. A bready malt aroma is typical for weizen bock, with caramel, dark fruit and melanoidin highlights. Hopping rates and aroma are subdued and barely noticeable. A bready/grainy malt aroma is typical, with toasty, cocoa-like and caramel notes. No diacetyl or DMS should be present.
- **Flavor:** Malty sweet and full tasting, presents a cocoa-like and/or caramel flavor. Estery and phenolic elements of this beer should be evident. Weizen bock exhibits the same fruity, phenolic flavors associated with other Bavarian style wheat beers, but intensified due to higher extract and alcohol.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium to full bodied, well attenuated and very highly carbonated. Alcohol should be evident as a warming sensation for weizen bock.
- **Note: Brewer should indicate whether the yeast should be intentionally roused.**
- **Note: The brewer MUST note weather the entry is a dunkelweizen or weizen bock.**

**Color: Copper to Dark Brown 5 – 30 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 - 18 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8 – 9.4**

## Category 13: Belgian- and French-Style Ales

### Subcategory A: Belgian-Style Pale Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to deep gold. Chill or slight yeast haze is okay. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Malt aroma is low to medium-low. Fruity esters dominate the aroma, while hop character may or may not be evident. Even clove, nutmeg or cinnamon-like phenolics may or may not be evident in the overall balanced beer. Hop character is typically floral, herbal, earthy or spicy, reflecting most commonly noble or English hops. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Malt flavor is low to medium. Bitterness is medium low to medium high. Earthy character and phenolic character are both acceptable when in balance with the overall beer. They can be bottle-conditioned and exhibit may some yeast character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium in body with moderate to high carbonation.

**Color: Yellow to Deep Gold 4 – 16 SRM**

**Bitterness: 25 – 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.5**

### Subcategory B: Saison

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to deep gold. Traditionally produced versions of this style are often bottle-conditioned. Chill or slight yeast haze is okay. Head formation and retention is excellent.
- **Aroma:** Malt aroma is low to medium-low. Fruity esters dominate the aroma, while hop character, complex alcohols, herbs, spices, and even clove and smoke-like phenolics may or may not be evident in the overall balanced beer. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Malt flavor is low but provides foundation for the overall balance. A certain amount of sour or acidic flavors is acceptable when in balance with other components. Earthy, cellar-like, musty aromas are acceptable. Traditional Saisons are lighter, lower alcohol beers but some markets have been increasing alcohol and all related characteristics. Diacetyl should not be perceived. They are often bottle-conditioned and exhibit some yeast character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium in body with high to very high carbonation.

**Color: Yellow to Deep Gold 4 – 16 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 7.0**

### Subcategory C: Bière de Garde

- **Appearance:** Color is golden to light brown. Chill haze is okay. Traditionally produced versions of this style are often bottle-conditioned. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** A biscuity, toasted malt aroma should be the most prominent aroma character, with low to medium hop aromas that are herbal, earthy or noble-type in character. Fruity esters can be low to medium in intensity. Earthy, cellar-like musty aromas are acceptable and often included. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Slight malt sweetness, and medium hop bitterness. Malt character should be toasty, biscuit-like or cracker-like. Low caramel character is okay but optional. Noble-type hop, herbal or earthy flavors should be low to medium. Flavor of alcohol is evident. These beers are often bottle-conditioned and exhibit some yeast character.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium body. Often highly carbonated.

**Color: Golden to Light Brown 8 – 12 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 7.9**

### Subcategory D: Dubbel

- **Appearance:** Dark amber to brown. Head is dense and retention is good. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures.
- **Aroma:** Nutty, chocolate-like, caramel and roast malt aroma. A faint hop aroma is acceptable. Fruity esters (especially banana) are appropriate. No DMS, diacetyl should be below or near threshold.
- **Flavor:** Characterized by low bitterness, no hop flavor and a malty sweetness. Malt flavor should follow malt aroma: nutty, cocoa-like, caramel and soft roast character.
- **Mouth Feel:** This medium- to full-bodied beer is well carbonated to highly carbonated.

**Color: Dark Amber to Brown 18 – 35 SRM**

**Bitterness: 18 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 7.5**

### Subcategory E: Tripel

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to gold. Head retention is good. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures.
- **Aroma:** Complex, fruity, malty aroma with spicy, phenolic notes. No DMS, diacetyl below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** Often characterized by a complex, fruity, flavor with spicy, phenolic notes with a neutral hop/malt balance. Can be sweet. There should be no roasted or dark malts. Low hop flavor is okay. Tripel often exhibits notes of allspice, nutmeg, and cinnamon (not clove). Tripel can be peppery.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium bodied and well carbonated. Alcohol strength and flavor should be evident.

**Color: Yellow to Gold 5 – 10 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.0 – 10.0**

### Subcategory F: Belgian-Style Pale (Golden) Strong Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is yellow to golden. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Belgian yeast -generated fruity, phenol/spicy, and/or earthy aromas. A subtle light or pale malt character is appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Hop bitterness, flavor and aroma is low to medium. Grain bills of these beers are often augmented with brewing sugars, and they are well attenuated. The intensity of malt character should be low to medium, often along with a complex fruitiness. Belgian yeast -generated fruity, phenol/spicy, and/or earthy flavors are present. Herbs and spices are sometimes used to flavor these strong ales, but should be subtle and in balance with the other elements of the beer. Background yeast acidity is okay when in balance with other elements.
- **Mouth Feel:** Relatively light body for a beer of its alcoholic strength. Often bottle-conditioned and highly carbonated.

**Color: Yellow to Gold 3.5 – 7.0 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 - 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 7.0 – 11.0**

### Subcategory G: Belgian-Style Dark Strong Ale

- **Appearance:** Color is amber to dark brown. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Belgian yeast -generated fruity, phenol/spicy, and/or earthy aromas. Fruity aromas are characteristic. Rich caramel and soft roasted malt character is appropriate. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** Hop bitterness, flavor and aroma is low to medium. Grain bills of these beers are often augmented with brewing sugars, and they are well attenuated. The intensity of malt character can be rich, creamy, and sweet with intensities ranging from medium to high. Belgian yeast -generated

fruity, phenol/spicy, and/or earthy flavors are present. Herbs and spices are sometimes used to flavor these strong ales, but should be subtle and in balance with the other elements of the beer. Background yeast acidity is okay when in balance with other elements.

- **Mouth Feel:** Well attenuated, ranging from medium to full-bodied. Often bottle-conditioned and highly carbonated.
- **Note: Beers marketed as “quadruple” can be appropriately entered into this category**

**Color:** Amber to Dark Brown 7.0 – 20.0 SRM

**Bitterness:** 20 - 30 IBU

**Alcohol:** ABV 7.0 – 11.0

### **Subcategory H: Other Belgian-Style Ales**

Belgium is home to countless unique, idiosyncratic and fascinating beers. As a result, Belgian beers often do not fit into general style categories. Recognizing this fact, this category exists for beers which follow or are inspired by various Belgian traditions, but do not fit into other existing style categories.

**To allow for accurate evaluation by the judge panel, brewers must provide information and context about the entry, such as what unique regional or historical traditions provide inspiration, what classic Belgian style serves as a starting point, or what unique interpretation of an established Belgian style makes an entry suitable for this category.** (SEE Sub Category E.)

- **Appearance:** varies with style
- **Aroma:** varies with style
- **Flavor:** varies with style
- **Mouth Feel:** varies with style

**Color:** variable according to base beer style

**Bitterness:** variable according to base beer style

**Alcohol:** variable according to base beer style

## **Category 14: Sour Ales**

### **Subcategory A: Flanders-Style Red or Brown Ale**

- **Appearance:** Color is medium copper to brown. Chill haze is acceptable at low temperatures. When bottle-conditioned, may appear cloudy when served.
- **Aroma:** Lactic and/or acetic aromas are appropriate, as well as low to moderate roasted malt character in Flanders Browns, or low to moderate caramel character for Flanders Reds. Fruity ester character is appropriate for both styles. No hop aroma. No DMS, and diacetyl should be below or near threshold levels.
- **Flavor:** A fruity estery ale character is apparent with slight to strong lactic sourness and spiciness. No hop flavors. They have low to medium bitterness. Roasted malt character in flavor is acceptable at low levels for Flanders Browns, or caramel character for Flanders Reds. Oak-like or woody characters may be pleasantly integrated into overall palate. Very small quantities of diacetyl are acceptable, but no diacetyl is preferred.
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium bodied. Some versions may be more highly carbonated.

**Color:** Medium Copper to Brown 12 – 18 SRM

**Bitterness:** 15 – 25 IBU

**Alcohol:** ABV 4.8 – 5.5

### Subcategory B: Lambic, Fruit Lambic and Gueuze Lambic

**Note: Brewers must note whether their entry is to be classified as a Lambic, Gueuze or Fruit Lambic. Fruited versions should specify the fruit used.**

- Appearance: Young or straight lambic is straw to yellow and may be tinted with a fruit color. Gueuze lambic is typically a bit darker due to oxidation and may be yellow to copper. Cloudiness is acceptable.
- Aroma: Intensely estery, wild, barnyard-like aroma profile typical of a spontaneous fermentation. If fruit is added, it should exhibit notes of the fruit. Traditional hop aroma is not present; however, a slight cheesiness or floral-like aroma from the use of aged hops is often present and acceptable.
- Flavor: Traditionally, Lambics and Gueuze and spontaneously fermented. They express high to very high levels of fruity esters as well as bacteria and yeast-derived sourness. Characteristic horsey, goaty, leathery and phenolic aromas and flavors derived from *Brettanomyces* yeast are often present at moderate levels. High to very high fruity-estery aromas are present, as are sour and acidic aromas and flavors. Carbonation can range from very low to high. Vanillin and other wood-derived flavors should not be evident. Diacetyl character should be absent. In fruited versions, fruit sourness may also be an important part of the profile. Historically, traditional Lambics are dry and completely attenuated, exhibiting no residual sweetness either from malt, sugar, fruit or other sweeteners. Some versions often have a degree of sweetness contributed by fruit sugars, other sugars or other sweeteners. Gueuze Lambics is a blend of old and young lambic and always bottle conditioned. Traditionally, lambic is brewed with unmalted wheat, malted barley, and stale, aged hops.
- Mouth Feel: Quite dry and light bodied. Straight or young lambic will be low in carbonation; gueuze is traditionally bottle conditioned and will be highly effervescent and dry.

**Color: Straw to Copper 6 - 13 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8-6.3**

### Subcategory C: American Sour Ale

**Note: This category is for sour beers that have been brewed without *Brettanomyces* AND without wood-derived flavors from barrel aging.** Many breweries enter their kettle soured beers, flavored Berliner Weiss, or flavored Gose as American Sour Beers. Beers made with fruits, spices, or other specialty ingredients may be entered into this category. Such beers exhibiting wood-derived characters or characters of liquids previously aged in wood are characterized as Wood-Aged Sour Beer. *Brettanomyces* character, or other flavors driven by a mixed fermentation, should not be present. ***The brewer should specify a traditional ale, lager, or experimental base beer for his/her entry, or the traditional sour beer being elaborated on. The brewer must list any fruits, herbs, spices, or specialty ingredients used.***

- Appearance: Straw to black depending on underlying beer style. Chill haze, bacteria haze, and yeast haze is acceptable
- Aroma: Malt and hop aromas are generally low; however, this may vary depending on the base style of beer. Moderate to high fruity esters and flavors are evident, as are sour and acidic aromas. Fruited versions will

reflect aromas of the fruit that has been used. Diacetyl, DMS and *Brettanomyces* should not be perceived

- Flavor: Clean, lactic-derived acidity is the hallmark flavor of most beers in this style. Malt and hop flavor may range from low to high depending on the base beer. Perceived bitterness may range from low to high. Diacetyl, DMS, and *Brettanomyces* should not be perceived. Beers entered in this category should demonstrate a substantial level of acidity/sourness. While “substantial” or “dominant” acidity is an important feature of the beers in this category, winning examples will harmoniously balance acidity against other elements of the beer, and the ultimate goal is a refreshing, balanced and innovative sour beer. A wide range of acids may contribute to the overall character of this beer, including lactic, acetic, citric, malic, tartaric, and organic fatty acids. Enteric (fecal), butyric (vomit), or isovaleric (cheesy, rubbery) character is not appropriate as they are widely considered flaws. If present, acetic character is balanced and sweet rather than harsh or sharp. Moderate to intense, yet balanced, fruity-estery flavors should be evident. There should be no residual flavors from liquids previously aged in a barrel such as bourbon or sherry. Wood vessels may be used during the fermentation and aging process, but wood-derived flavors such as vanillin should not be present. Fruited versions will exhibit fruitiness in harmony with malt, hop, acidity and other characteristics of fermentation. Such beers may take on the color of fruits or other ingredients.
- Mouth Feel: Body may range from low to high. Typically these beers finish dry, but some lasting sweetness may be evident.

**Color: Straw to Copper 6 - 13 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 – 25 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.8-6.3**

#### **Subcategory D: Sour Ale with Brettanomyces/Mixed-Culture Brett Beer**

**Note: This category is for beers that have both high acidity AND evident Brettanomyces character.** Beers made with fruits, spices, or other specialty ingredients may be entered into this category. This category encompasses a wide range of beers that have notable “wild” yeast character from the use of non-Saccharomyces yeast and bacteria. Beers in this category may be brewed with traditional mixed culture fermentations, spontaneous fermentations, or blending. Fruited versions will exhibit fruit flavors in balance with other elements. Wood vessels may be used for fermentation and aging, but wood-derived aromas and flavors such as vanillin should not be present. Versions exhibiting attributes derived from wood or liquids previously aged in wood would be classified in other Wood-Aged Beer categories. ***The brewer must identify a base beer style for more accurate evaluation by the judge panel, and the brewer should list any fruits or specialty ingredients in order for the beer to be judged properly.***

- Appearance: Color ranges from light to dark according to the base beer style. May be hazy or bright. Beer color may be influenced by the color of added fruits or other ingredients. Chill haze, bacterial haze, and yeast-induced haze are allowable at any level.
- Aroma: Tart, acidic character from bacteria such as *Lactobacillus* and *Pediococcus* is evident. Phenolic, horsey, leathery, barnyard-like, and tropical aromas from *Brettanomyces* are appropriate. Fruity ester character is appropriate at moderate to high levels. Hop aroma can range from low to high.

No diacetyl or DMS. Malt aroma is typically low, but may be evident in darker versions.

- Flavor: Tart, acidic flavors from lactic-acid producing bacteria and phenolic, acidic, and fruity/fatty estery notes from *Brettanomyces* form the primary flavor elements. The sourness can be the result of many different microorganisms, raw materials, or brewing processes, either used individually or in concert with each other. *Brettanomyces* character should be present and expressed as horsey, goaty, leathery, phenolic, fruity and/or acidic aromas and flavors. Bitterness may range from low to high. Cultured yeast may be used in the fermentation. Bacteria should be incorporated and in evidence. Bacteria will contribute acidity which may or may not dominate the flavor profile. The overall goal is to produce a beer with a balanced, complex sour/tart character that is harmonious with the malt and hops of the base beer, as well as any other flavor components. Strong sulfur compounds, including DMS, should not be present, nor should unpleasant chlorophenols (band aid), THP (corn nut, mousey, Cheerios), or undesirable, “sick” acidic notes from fatty acids or *pediococcus*.
- Mouthfeel: Often light to medium-bodied, typically very well attenuated from yeast, wild yeast and bacterial fermentation. Carbonation levels vary from low to high, depending on the results desired by the brewer.

**Color: variable according to base beer style**

**Bitterness: variable according to base beer style**

**Alcohol: variable according to base beer style**

### Subcategory E: Brett Beer

**Note: This category is for beers fermented with *Brettanomyces* that have low acidity and do not have wood-derived flavors.** This might include beers that have been brewed entirely in stainless steel and bottle conditioned with *Brettanomyces*, 100% fermented Brett beers, or mixed culture beers brewed with *Saccharomyces* and Brett in concert. Beers that are made with *Brettanomyces* and include fruits, spices, or other specialty ingredients may be entered into this category. Fruited or flavored versions will exhibit favors in balance with other elements and should reflect the ingredients used. Wood vessels may be used for fermentation and aging, but wood-derived aromas and flavors such as vanillin should not be present. Versions exhibiting attributes derived from wood or liquids previously aged in wood would be classified in other Wood-Aged Beer categories. ***The brewer must identify a base beer style for more accurate evaluation by the judge panel, and the brewer should list any fruits or specialty ingredients in order for the beer to be judged properly.***

- Appearance: Color ranges from light to dark according to the base beer style. May be hazy or bright. Beer color may be influenced by the color of added fruits or other ingredients. Chill haze, bacterial haze, and yeast-induced haze are allowable at any level.
- Aroma: Phenolic, horsey, leathery, barnyard-like, feral, and fruity/tropical aromas from *Brettanomyces* are appropriate. Fruity ester character is appropriate at moderate to high levels. Hop aroma can range from low to high. No diacetyl or DMS. Malt aroma is typically low but may be evident in darker versions.
- Flavor: “Funky” notes of *Brettanomyces* should be present and forward, including barnyard-like, feral compounds, phenols, and esters derived from fatty acids. Moderate to intense fruity-estery aromas and flavors should be

evident. *Brettanomyces* character may be dominant and should be expressed as horsey, goaty, leathery, phenolic, fruity and/or acidic aromas and flavors. Bitterness may range from low to high. Cultured yeast may be used in the fermentation. Beers in this category may show elevated levels of acidity, due to the presence of bacteria; however, acidic character is not required for this category, and heavily sour beers are better entered elsewhere in the competition. Beers in this style should not incorporate bacteria or exhibit a bacteria-derived flavor profile. Strong sulfur compounds, including DMS, should not be present, nor should heavy chlorophenols (band aid), THP (corn nut, mousey, Cheerios), nor undesirable, “sick” acidic notes from fatty acids or *Pediococcus*.

- Mouthfeel: Body may range from low to high. Typically, these beers finish very dry. Carbonation levels vary from low to high, depending on the results desired by the brewer.

**Color: variable according to base beer style**

**Bitterness: variable according to base beer style**

**Alcohol: variable according to base beer style**

### **Subcategory F: Wood- and Barrel-Aged Sour or Brett Beer**

**Note: This category includes any beer that has a substantial acidic and/or wild yeast character AND has a substantial oak or barrel-related character.**

Wood-aging should impart unique flavors to the beer-- even if the flavor that it contributes is not wood-like. Used spirit and/or wine and other barrels are often used, imparting complexity and uniqueness to a beer. Beers made with fruits, spices, or other specialty ingredients may be entered into this category. Fruited and flavored versions will exhibit the appropriate fruit or specialty flavors in balance with other elements. ***The brewer must identify a base beer style for more accurate evaluation by the judge panel, and the brewer should list any fruits or specialty ingredients in order for the beer to be judged properly.***

- Appearance: Color ranges from light to dark according to the base beer style. May be hazy or bright. Beer color may be influenced by the color of added fruits or other ingredients. Chill haze, bacterial haze, and yeast-induced haze are allowable at any level.
- Aroma: A wide range of aromas is to be expected and accepted in this category. Tart, acidic character from bacteria such as *Lactobacillus* and *Pediococcus* may be evident. Phenolic, horsey, leathery, barnyard-like, and tropical aromas from *Brettanomyces* are appropriate. Fruity ester character is appropriate at moderate to high levels. Hop aroma can range from low to high. Aromas from used spirit and/or wine barrels should be present, as may aromas from the use of neutral or new oak. No diacetyl or DMS. Malt aroma is typically low, but may be evident in darker versions.
- Flavor: A wide range of complex flavors that may include: tart, acidic flavors from lactic-acid producing bacteria and phenolic, acidic, and fruity/fatty estery notes from *Brettanomyces*. The intensity of the acidic or “wild” character may vary from moderate to intense. Wood-derived flavors such as vanillin, or other wood flavors are appropriate. Flavors derived from liquids previously held in wood vessels (wine, rum, whiskey, sherry, gin, etc.) may also be present and contribute to the overall flavor and complexity of the beer. Bitterness may range from low to high. Cultured yeast may be used in the



fermentation. Strong sulfur compounds, including DMS, should not be present, nor should unpleasant chlorophenols (band aid), THP (corn nut, mousey, Cheerios), or undesirable, “sick” acidic notes from fatty acids or *Pediococcus*.

- **Mouthfeel:** Varies with base beer. Carbonation may vary from still to very high.

**Color: variable according to base beer style**

**Bitterness: variable according to base beer style**

**Alcohol: variable according to base beer style**

### Subcategory G: Classic Gose

- **Appearance:** Color is pale straw to medium amber. These beers can be hazy. A very thick, white head is characteristic with good retention.
- **Aroma:** Low to no malt character that may have bready, yeasty or unbaked sourdough bread like character. No noticeable hop character. Light to medium fruity ester aromas of pear, apple or other pome fruits can bring a sense of low sourness. Low to no coriander or lemon are also acceptable. Horsey, leathery or earthy aromas contributed by *Brettanomyces* may be evident in very low levels. No diacetyl or DMS should be present.
- **Flavor:** Low to moderate sourness without being overbearing. Pome fruit character follows aroma with a light to moderate presence. Low notes of lemon, or grapefruit. Light to medium salt character that should be noticeable but not overtly salty. No hop flavor. Low to no hop bitterness. Malt flavors will appear light to medium and be bready or doughy.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-light to medium-full body. Effervescent with high carbonation. A slightly tingly, mouthwatering quality may be perceived from the salt.

**Color: Pale Straw to Yellow 2- 8 SRM**

**Bitterness: 5 - 15 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 4.0**

### Subcategory H: Flavored Gose

- **Appearance:** Color is pale straw to medium amber and may be tinted to mimic the fruit. A very thick, white head is characteristic with good retention. These beers can be hazy.
- **Aroma:** Low to no malt character that may have bready, yeasty or unbaked sourdough bread like character. No noticeable hop character. Light to medium fruity ester aromas of pear, apple or other pome fruits can bring a sense of low sourness. Low to no coriander or lemon are also acceptable. Horsey, leathery or earthy aromas contributed by *Brettanomyces* may be evident in very low levels. No diacetyl or DMS should be present. Added spices, fruits, or other brewer listed ingredients **must** be evident. **The brewer must list the fruit used in the beer.**
- **Flavor:** Low to moderate sourness without being overbearing. Pome fruit character follows aroma with a light to moderate presence. Low notes of lemon, or grapefruit. Light to medium salt character that should be noticeable but not overtly salty. No hop flavor. Low to no hop bitterness. Malt flavors are light to medium and may be bready or doughy. Added spices, fruits, or other brewer listed ingredients **must** be evident. **The brewer must list the fruit used in the beer.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium-light to medium-full body. Effervescent with high carbonation. A slightly tingly, mouthwatering quality may be perceived from the salt.

**Color: Pale Straw to Yellow 2- 8 SRM**

**Bitterness: 5 - 15 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 4.0**

## Hybrid Beer Styles

### Category 15: Hybrid Beers

#### Subcategory A: California Common

- **Appearance:** Color is light amber to dark amber. Bright without any haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Medium woody or earthy hop aroma and low to medium-low fruity esters. Malt aroma has toasty and caramel character. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** The style is characterized by balanced low to medium-low fruity esters and caramel & toasted malt flavor. Medium level of earthy or woody hop flavor is part of the style. Bitterness is medium to medium high.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium bodied and well-carbonated.

**Color: Light Amber to Dark Amber 12 – 18 SRM**

**Bitterness: 35 – 45 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 5.4**

#### Subcategory B: Rye Beer

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to dark brown. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Toffee, caramel, or biscuit-like aromas with low fruity esters (especially noticeable in darker versions). Spicy rye character should be noticeable. No diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** These beers should be brewed with perceptible levels of rye malt. Phenols may be present and some astringency is acceptable in darker versions but is well balanced with the malt sweetness. The malt character may present as cocoa or caramel flavors in darker examples. Low to medium hop flavor and bitterness.
- **Mouth Feel:** They have light to medium body and some mild astringency is acceptable in darker versions. Yeast body and mouth feel should be evident if served with yeast. **(The brewer should indicate that it is an example with yeast and if it should be roused when served.)**

**Color: Straw to Dark Brown 4 – 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 - 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.8 – 7.0**

#### Subcategory C: Hybrid Style Beers (two or more style traditions)

The Craft Brewing industry is filled with innovators and experimenters who imagine and produce beers that defy traditional categories, stretch boundaries, and blur distinctions between styles. This category exists as a home for beers that are unique and creative combinations of two or more brewing traditions.

***To allow for accurate evaluation by the judge panel, brewers must provide information about the traditional styles being combined. Entries that lack information about the styles that are being combined, and the specific elements of each style that are featured in the finished beer will be at a disadvantage during judging.***

- For ease of judging panel, please use the names of the beer styles combined rather than category numbers.
- Example: “American-Style IPA produced with German Pilsner-type hops,” not “category 7D and 2B.”
- **Appearance:** varies with styles being combined or modified.
- **Aroma:** varies with styles being combined or modified.
- **Flavor:** varies with styles being combined or modified.
- **Mouth Feel:** varies with styles being combined or modified.

**Color:** varies with styles being combined or modified  
**Bitterness:** varies with styles being combined or modified  
**Alcohol:** varies with styles being combined or modified

### Subcategory D: Session Beer

- **Appearance:** Color is of the base beer style. May be bright to hazy also depending on the base style. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** Aroma is characteristic of the base beer style but at lower levels.
- **Flavor:** The style is characterized by a lower alcohol and milder flavor profile of a classic beer style either ale or lager. Mild flavors and drinkability should be paramount. **To allow for accurate evaluation by the judge panel, brewers must provide information about the beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Light to medium bodied and refreshing.

**Color: Straw and Darker +2 SRM**

**Bitterness: 10 - 35 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 3.0 – 5.0**

## Category 16: Smoke- and Wood Flavored Beers

### Subcategory A: German-Style Rauchbier

- **Appearance:** Color is gold to light amber. Bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good.
- **Aroma:** The aroma should strike a balance between malt, hop, and smoke. Malt character is sweet and toasty. No fruity esters, diacetyl or DMS.
- **Flavor:** German Style Rauchbier should have smoky characteristics ranging from low to high. Smoke character is not harsh or phenolic, but smooth, with a mild sweetness. Malt flavor should be toasty with mild caramel notes, similar to Vienna or Maerzen/Oktoberfest Lagers.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium body. Well-carbonated.

**Color: Gold to Light Amber 4-14 SRM**

**Bitterness: 20 – 30 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.5 – 6.3**

### Subcategory B: Smoke-Flavored Beer

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable in appearance. Head formation and retention as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style with smoke character.
- **Flavor:** Any style of beer can be smoked; the goal is to reach a balance between the style's character and the smoky properties. **The brewer must list the traditional or experimental style of the base beer as well as the wood, malt, or grain type used as a smoke source (e.g. "alder smoked dry stout"). Beer entries not accompanied by this information will be at a disadvantage during judging.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: Variable**

**Alcohol: Variable**

### Subcategory C: Barrel-Aged Beer

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style (see requirements below). Clear or hazy beer is acceptable. Head formation and retention as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style with added aromas from the type of wood or barrel used, or the previous contents of the barrel.

- **Flavor:** Barrel-aged beer, whether a traditional or experimental style, or a hybrid or blend of styles, has been aged for a period of time in a wooden barrel or in contact with wood. This beer is aged to impart the character of the wood and/or what has previously been in the wood. New wood is often characterized as a blend of vanilla and wood character. Used sherry, bourbon, scotch, port, wine and other barrels are often used, imparting those flavors to the beer. **The brewer must list the type of wood used (new or old, oak or other wood type), type of barrel used (new, port/ whiskey/ wine/ sherry/ other), and base beer style. Beer entries not accompanied by this information will be at a disadvantage during judging.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: Variable IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 8.5**

### **Subcategory D: Barrel-Aged Strong Beer**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable. Head formation and retention is often compromised by high alcohol levels.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style with added aromas from the type of wood or barrel used, or the previous contents of the barrel.
- **Flavor:** Barrel-aged Strong Beer represents the majority of marketplace examples of barrel-aged beer. It can be either a traditional style or experimental style, or a hybrid or blend of styles, and has been aged for a period of time in a wooden barrel or in contact with wood. This beer is aged to impart the character of the wood and/or what has previously been in the wood. New wood is often characterized as a blend of vanilla and wood character. Used sherry, bourbon, scotch, port, wine and other barrels are often used, imparting those flavors to the beer. **The brewer must list the type of wood used (new or old, oak or other wood type), type of barrel used (new, port/ whiskey/ wine/ sherry/ other), base beer style or achieved character.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: Variable IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 8.5 – 14+**

## **Category 17: Flavored Beers**

### **Subcategory A: Honey Beer**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable, but most commercial examples are bright. Head formation and retention is good, or as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Character of honey should be perceived in the aroma and balanced with other aromas.
- **Flavor:** These beers are brewed using honey and malted barley. Beers may be brewed to any style. Character of honey should be perceived in the flavor and balanced with other flavors. **The brewer must list the base beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style but may be lighter.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: Variable IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 11.9**

### **Subcategory B: Fruit Beers**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style or may be tinted with fruit color. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable in appearance. Head formation and retention is good, or as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style, and added fruits.
- **Flavor:** Fruit is used in the beer to impart a distinctive fruity presence. The characteristics of the base beer should be evident. **The brewer must list what fruits are used, and must also list a base beer style.**

- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: 5 – 70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9**

### **Subcategory C: Vegetable or Field Beers**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable. Head formation and retention is good, or as appropriate to base beer style, and may be tinged with color from the added vegetable.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style, and vegetables added.
- **Flavor:** Vegetables are used in the beer to impart a distinctive flavor. The characteristics of the base beer should be evident. **The brewer must list what vegetables that are used, and must also list a base beer style. Beers flavored with pumpkin as the vegetable should be entered as a Pumpkin Beer Subcategory 17-D. Beers flavored with chilies should be entered as Chili Beer Subcategory 17-G.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: 5 – 70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9**

### **Subcategory D: Pumpkin or Pumpkin Spiced Beers**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style or may be tinged with color from the added pumpkin. Clear or hazy beer is acceptable. Head formation and retention is good, or as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style, and pumpkin. Spiced examples may have a detectable “pumpkin spice” character, but this should be balanced with the overall beer.
- **Flavor:** Pumpkin is used in the beer to impart a distinctive presence. Spiced examples may have a detectable “pumpkin spice” character, but this should be balanced with the overall beer. The characteristics of the base beer should be evident. **The brew must denote whether the beer is pumpkin or pumpkin spiced when entering. The brewer must also list a base beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.
  - **Color: Variable**
  - **Bitterness: 5 – 70 IBU**
  - **Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9**

### **Subcategory E: Herbed/Spiced**

- **Appearance:** Color as appropriate to base beer style. May be hazy from adjuncts. Head formation and retention as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Appropriate to the base style, herbs and spices added.
- **Flavor:** A low hopping level puts the emphasis on the spices used. The character of beer should be in balance with the spice and a good evaluation is based on balance of flavors. **The brewer must list the herbs and/or spices are used and must also list a base beer style. Beers spiced with typical pumpkin spices should be entered as Pumpkin Spiced Beers (17D).**
- **Mouth Feel:** Appropriate to the base style.

**Color: Variable**

**Bitterness: 5 - 70 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9**

**Subcategory F: Coffee Beers**

- **Appearance:** Color is variable according to base beer style or may be tinted with coffee colors. Head formation and retention as appropriate for the base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Variable according to base beer style, but the coffee character should be both evident and complimentary to the character of the base beer.
- **Flavor:** Variable according to base beer style, but the coffee character should be both evident and complimentary to the character of the base beer. **The brewer must list the base beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Variable according to base beer style

**Color: Variable****Bitterness: 5 - 70 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9****Subcategory G: Chocolate/Cocoa Beers**

- **Appearance:** Color is variable according to base beer style or may be tinted with chocolate like colors. Head formation and retention is appropriate for the base beer style but may be diminished by the addition of chocolate or cocoa.
- **Aroma:** Variable according to base beer style, but the chocolate or cocoa character should be both evident and complimentary to the character of the base beer.
- **Flavor:** Variable according to base beer style, but the chocolate or cocoa character should be both evident and complimentary to the character of the base beer. **The brewer must list the base beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Variable according to base beer style

**Color: Variable****Bitterness: 5 - 70 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9****Subcategory H: Chili Beer**

- **Appearance:** Clear or hazy beer is acceptable in appearance. Color as appropriate for the base beer style. Head formation and retention as appropriate to base beer style.
- **Aroma:** Character of the types of chilies used, and the base beer style should be perceived in the aroma.
- **Flavor:** The character of beer should be in balance with the heat and a good evaluation is based on balance of flavors. **The brewer must list the types of chilies used, and must list a base beer style.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Chili peppers are used in the beer to impart the distinctive chili heat in addition to the characteristics of the base beer.

**Color: Variable****Bitterness: 5 - 70 IBU****Alcohol: ABV 4.0 – 6.9****Category 18: Specialty and Experimental Beers**

This category includes beers that may not covered by any other category. These beers may be a lager, ale or other beer that is primarily grain-based and may use special brewing techniques and/or ingredients. These beers may be based on a traditional beer style but may be out of the style's normal parameters (i.e. higher alcohol content or higher than normal hopping). **Entries must state the primary ingredients, for example, "Rye Honey Beer" or "Millet and Prickly Pear Beer" or "Watermelon, Garlic Infused, Rauch Beer", etc. and identify these beers as either loose or close interpretations of an accepted style.** The special ingredients should be featured in the character of the beer. The discrepancy with the traditional style description should be listed if applicable.

**NOTE:** The 2021 NABA Style Guide© contains several new styles in which a beer may be entered that may have been entered here in previous years. **Beer entries not accompanied by this information will be at a disadvantage during judging.**

## Category 19: Cider and Perry

### Subcategory A: Draft Cider and Apple Wine

- **Appearance:** Color is straw to medium gold. Usually clear to bright. Head formation and retention is variable; may be still but usually effervescent.
- **Aroma:** Character of the types of apples used, usually culinary apples, should be evident. There may be other esters, alcohols and sulfur (H<sub>2</sub>S) notes present in low levels.
- **Flavor:** Apple or pear taste should be crisp and evident. Refreshing and drinkable, not harsh. Dry varieties will be more wine-like. Sweeter examples should not be cloying. **No additives are appropriate** (see Specialty Cider and Fruit Flavored Cider).
- **Mouth Feel:** Alcohol may be evident at the upper end of the range. Body is light to medium. No carbonic bite. Astringency, if present, is preferred only in the finish and should be from tannins. No bitterness. Apple wines are typically lighter and may be very effervescent.

**Color: Straw to Medium Gold 3 - 10 SRM**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5 – 7.5**

### Subcategory B: Traditional Cider/Cidre

- **Appearance:** Hazy to bright. Yellow to amber. Head formation and retention is variable; may be still or effervescent.
- **Aroma:** Fruity esters suggest apples but is not necessarily apple aroma. May be low notes of sulfur, phenols, smoke and barnyard.
- **Flavor:** Very subtle spicy, smoky, phenolic and horsy notes may be present but not required and must not be assertive. Apple-like esters and apple flavors. Never salty. Can be dry or sweet.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium to full body. Astringency is perceived as balance to the sweetness. May be some bitterness in the finish.

**Color: Yellow to Amber 3 - 15 SRM**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 9.0**

### Subcategory C: Farmhouse Style Cider

- **Appearance:** Color is pale yellow to brown. Usually clear. May contain apple pulp but no haze. Head formation and retention is variable.
- **Aroma:** The aroma should have floral, alcohol notes with some other fermentation or yeast byproducts and notes of sulfur (H<sub>2</sub>S).
- **Flavor:** These have a strong apple flavor and are usually dry. Because wild yeasts may be used, its flavor profile may range from unsophisticated to aggressively complex with aggressive notes of sulfur. **Adjuncts such as raisins, molasses, and sugars are common and should be listed.** Notes of wood may be present if barreled aged. **Barrel aging should be noted.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Warming alcohol may be present. Astringency, if present, is preferred only in the finish. May be still or effervescent.

**Color: Pale Yellow to Brown 3 - 20 SRM**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 6.0 – 15.0**

**Subcategory D: Fruit Flavored Cider and Perry**

- **Appearance:** Color is pale yellow to brown or a color associated with the ~~other~~ added fruit. Usually clear. Head formation and retention is variable.
- **Aroma:** Apple or pear aroma must predominate with notes of the adjuncts. There may be other esters, alcohols, and very low levels of sulfur present.
- **Flavor:** Apple or pear taste should be crisp and evident. The flavor profile should include any adjuncts balanced with the apple or pear. Acidic and sweet characters should be in balance. **Perry, a fermented pear juice beverage (not a pear cider which is mostly apple juice) that should be entered as a Perry.**
- **Mouth Feel:** May be dry or sweet with light to full body. Warming alcohol may be present but not harsh. Astringency, if present, is preferred only in the finish.

**Color: Pale Yellow or Color Associated with Added Flavors 3 - 25 SRM.**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 15.5**

**Subcategory E: Specialty (Flavored) Cider and Perry**

- **Appearance:** Color is pale yellow or any color associated with a flavor additive. Usually clear. Head formation and retention is variable.
- **Aroma:** Apple or pear aroma must predominate with notes of the adjunct fruit, spice or hops. There may be other esters, alcohols, and low levels of sulfur present.
- **Flavor:** Apple or pear taste should be crisp and evident. The flavor profile should include any adjuncts **in** balance with the apple or pear. Acidity and sweetness characteristics should be in balance. **Adjuncts used to flavor the cider must be listed.**
- **Mouth Feel:** Cider may be dry or sweet with light to full body. Warming alcohol may be present but not harsh. Astringency, if present, is preferred only in the finish.

**Color: Pale Yellow or Color Associated with Added Flavors 3 - 25 SRM.**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 2.5 – 15.5**

**Subcategory F: Perry**

- **Appearance:** Very pale yellow. Hazy to clear. May be still or effervescent.
- **Aroma:** Pear aroma only but it is usually light and not overly fruity. White wine-like.
- **Flavor:** Pear flavor is subtle but clean and prevalent. No other flavors or adjuncts perceived. Never cloying but may present as sweet. May be a slight bitterness in finish.
- **Mouth Feel:** Medium full body. Tannins vary from low in draft Perry to high in more traditional Perry.

**Color: Pale Yellow 3 SRM**

**Bitterness: 0 IBU**

**Alcohol: ABV 5.0 – 9.0**

**Category 20: Alternative Products****Subcategory A: Soft Drinks N/A**

Soft drinks come in a variety of flavors including but not limited to, root beer, sarsaparilla, birch beer, cream soda, cola, and various fruit flavors. They should be clean and pleasing; not cloyingly sweet. Often produced by breweries, craft beer quality and attention to detail is expected. No off or overpowering flavor is desirable. They should be well balanced. Carbonation can be low to high but should complement the flavors used. Clean, refreshing and drinkable is the goal.



**Subcategory B: Hard Soft Drinks (Sodas)**

Hard Sodas are alternative alcohol beverages. They come in a variety of flavors including but not limited to, root beer, sarsaparilla, birch beer, ginger ale, cola, and various fruit flavors. They should be clean and pleasing; usually sweet but not cloyingly sweet. No off or overpowering flavor is desirable. They should be well balanced. Carbonation can be low to high but should complement the flavors used. Clean, refreshing and drinkable is the goal. Alcohol levels vary.

**Subcategory C: Hard Seltzers**

Hard Seltzers are alternative alcohol beverages. They come in a variety of flavors including but not limited to spices such as ginger and various fruit flavors such as mango, pineapple and mixed fruits. They should be clean and pleasing; not cloyingly sweet. No off or overpowering flavor is desirable. They should be well balanced. Carbonation is generally high. Clean, crisp, refreshing and drinkable is the goal. Alcohol levels vary. The brewer is at a disadvantage if they do not list all flavorings

**Category 21: Collaboration Beers**

Collaboration competition beers should be entered as Category 21 no matter the style for clarity of judging for the correct awards. Secondly the brewers should indicate the category number of the style of the beer (i.e. Category 21/15B) and all brewers should be named. Any and all styles in this style guide may be entered in this category.

**Category 22: Brewing School Beers**

Brewing School competition beers should be entered as Category 22 no matter the style for clarity of judging for the correct awards. Secondly the school should indicate the category number of the style of the beer (i.e. Category 21/15B). Any and all styles in this style guide, allowed by the entry rules, may be entered in this category. See [northamericanbrewers.org](http://northamericanbrewers.org) for details.