

Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. What should a judge do if they encounter a serious defect in a sample?**
 - A. Ignore it if it is minor**
 - B. Document it on the scoresheet**
 - C. Only discuss it with the head judge**
 - D. Raise it to the competition director**
- 2. What does the term "mashing" refer to in the brewing process?**
 - A. The brewing of hop wort**
 - B. The process of soaking grains in water to extract sugars**
 - C. The fermentation step involving yeast**
 - D. The filtering of yeast from the finished beer**
- 3. What does the term "Krausen" refer to in brewing?**
 - A. The final stage of fermentation**
 - B. The frothy head that forms on top of fermenting beer**
 - C. The process of adding hops**
 - D. The type of yeast used in brewing**
- 4. What contributes to the characteristic head of beer?**
 - A. High sugar content**
 - B. Efficient fermentation processes**
 - C. Proteins from the malt and hops**
 - D. Alcohol content**
- 5. What should judges avoid consuming within a few hours before a judging event?**
 - A. Fruits and Vegetables**
 - B. Spicy or Greasy Food**
 - C. Soft Drinks**
 - D. Beer**

- 6. What should judges primarily focus on during a competition?**
- A. Personal opinions of the beer**
 - B. Objective evaluation based on established guidelines**
 - C. The popularity of the beer style**
 - D. Comparing beers with friends at the event**
- 7. Must beers be evaluated in the sequence specified on the flight sheet?**
- A. Yes, they must be evaluated in order**
 - B. No, they can be evaluated in any order**
 - C. Only if the judge prefers**
 - D. Only for specific styles**
- 8. What can result from contamination by wild yeast in brewing?**
- A. Unexpected off-flavors such as sourness**
 - B. Increased carbonation levels**
 - C. Uniform sweetness throughout the beer**
 - D. Enhancements in hop aroma**
- 9. What characteristic does a high carbonation level impart to beer?**
- A. A smoother mouthfeel with less flavor**
 - B. A livelier mouthfeel and enhanced aroma**
 - C. A heavier body and increased bitterness**
 - D. A flat and dull taste**
- 10. Can a judge director not be eligible to serve as a judge if they have knowledge of the association between entries and entrants?**
- A. True, they cannot serve as a judge**
 - B. False, they can serve as a judge**
 - C. True, but only for certain competitions**
 - D. False, it depends on the entry category**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. B**
- 4. C**
- 5. B**
- 6. B**
- 7. B**
- 8. A**
- 9. B**
- 10. A**

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Explanations

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1. What should a judge do if they encounter a serious defect in a sample?

- A. Ignore it if it is minor**
- B. Document it on the scoresheet**
- C. Only discuss it with the head judge**
- D. Raise it to the competition director**

In the context of judging beer samples, a serious defect refers to a significant flaw that adversely affects the overall quality of the brew. Documentation on the scoresheet is crucial because it provides an official record of the defect encountered, which is important for both the brewer and the competition organizers. This feedback facilitates learning and improvement for the brewer, allowing them to understand where their product may have gone wrong. By documenting the defect, judges can help ensure that the competition maintains high standards through accountability and transparency. Additionally, having an accurate record is beneficial for any discussions that might occur later regarding the judging results or any potential re-evaluations of entries. The other options do not promote the importance of communicating the findings adequately. Ignoring a minor defect overlooks the responsibility of the judge to assess and provide constructive criticism. Discussing it only with the head judge could limit the transparency of the judging process, and raising it to the competition director may not be necessary unless it has broader implications for the competition. By choosing to document it on the scoresheet, the judge performs their role responsibly, fostering an environment of improvement and high-quality standards.

2. What does the term "mashing" refer to in the brewing process?

- A. The brewing of hop wort**
- B. The process of soaking grains in water to extract sugars**
- C. The fermentation step involving yeast**
- D. The filtering of yeast from the finished beer**

The term "mashing" refers to the critical step in the brewing process where crushed grains, typically malted barley, are soaked in warm water. This process activates enzymes present in the malt that convert the starches in the grains into fermentable sugars. The temperature of the water is carefully controlled, usually between 150°F to 160°F (65°C to 70°C), to optimize the enzymatic activity. By soaking the grains, the enzymes break down complex sugars into simpler sugars, which can later be fermented by yeast to produce alcohol. This step is essential because the sugars extracted during mashing are the primary source of fermentable material that will create the alcohol and flavors in the finished beer. Mashing typically takes about 60 to 90 minutes, and after this process, the resulting liquid, known as wort, is drained from the grain bed and is then boiled with hops before fermentation begins. Understanding mashing is vital for brewers, as the efficiency of this process significantly impacts the final product's flavor profile, body, and alcohol content.

3. What does the term "Krausen" refer to in brewing?

- A. The final stage of fermentation
- B. The frothy head that forms on top of fermenting beer**
- C. The process of adding hops
- D. The type of yeast used in brewing

The term "Krausen" refers to the frothy head that forms on top of fermenting beer. During fermentation, yeast becomes very active and produces a combination of foam and bubbles as it consumes sugars and releases carbon dioxide. This foamy layer typically appears shortly after fermentation has begun and can be quite thick, often rising above the surface of the beer in the fermentation vessel. Krausen is an important visual indicator of fermentation activity and can vary in appearance and duration depending on the yeast strain, fermentation temperature, and the specific beer recipe being used. It's a critical component in the brewing process as it signifies that yeast is healthy and actively fermenting the wort. This phase of fermentation can also affect the flavor profile and overall quality of the finished beer. In conclusion, recognizing and understanding krausen can help brewers assess the fermentation process and make necessary adjustments if the krausen does not develop as expected.

4. What contributes to the characteristic head of beer?

- A. High sugar content
- B. Efficient fermentation processes
- C. Proteins from the malt and hops**
- D. Alcohol content

The characteristic head of beer is primarily influenced by the presence of proteins derived from malt and hops. When beer is poured, these proteins interact with carbon dioxide bubbles that are released from the liquid, helping to stabilize and maintain the foam. Additionally, the specific proteins from malt and hops contribute to the formation of a lasting head, as they have surface-active properties that improve foam stability. Understanding this process highlights the importance of the ingredients and how they interact during fermentation and pouring. While sugar content, fermentation processes, and alcohol levels can affect various aspects of beer, it is specifically the proteins that play a critical role in foamy head retention. This is why the presence of proteins from malt and hops is the key factor contributing to beer's characteristic head.

5. What should judges avoid consuming within a few hours before a judging event?

A. Fruits and Vegetables

B. Spicy or Greasy Food

C. Soft Drinks

D. Beer

Judges should avoid consuming spicy or greasy food within a few hours before a judging event primarily because such foods can affect their palate and the ability to accurately assess the nuances of different beers. Spicy foods can lead to a heightened sensitivity to heat and spice, which may mask the flavors and aromas that judges need to detect in the beers they are evaluating. Similarly, greasy foods can leave a coating on the palate that dulls taste sensitivity, making it more difficult to identify subtle hop character or malt complexity. Judges aim to have a neutral palate to ensure that their evaluations are fair and accurate, and the consumption of spicy or greasy foods would likely interfere with this goal. The other options, while they may also have varying levels of effect, do not pose the same level of risk to taste perception in the context of judging beer.

6. What should judges primarily focus on during a competition?

A. Personal opinions of the beer

B. Objective evaluation based on established guidelines

C. The popularity of the beer style

D. Comparing beers with friends at the event

Judges should primarily focus on objective evaluation based on established guidelines during a competition because this ensures a fair and consistent assessment of the beers being judged. The BJCP has specific style guidelines that define the characteristics, flavors, and aromas expected in each beer style. By adhering to these criteria, judges can provide an unbiased evaluation that reflects the quality and adherence of the beer to its style rather than personal preference or subjective opinions. This objective approach is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the competition, as it eliminates individual biases and provides a standard for all participants. It also helps judges communicate their assessments clearly and effectively based on what the styles demand, thus supporting a more transparent and educational judging process. In doing so, the judges also foster an environment that encourages brewing excellence and adherence to style conventions, which ultimately benefits all entrants in the competition.

7. Must beers be evaluated in the sequence specified on the flight sheet?

- A. Yes, they must be evaluated in order**
- B. No, they can be evaluated in any order**
- C. Only if the judge prefers**
- D. Only for specific styles**

When evaluating beers during a judging session, it is generally understood that judges have the flexibility to assess the beers in any order they choose. This flexibility allows judges to sample and evaluate beers based on their own preference and palate sensitivity at any point during the tasting. Evaluating beers in a particular sequence can lead to biases or a negative impact on a judge's ability to discern flavors, aromas, and characteristics due to palate fatigue or overwhelming sensations from previously tasted beers. As such, this approach emphasizes a more personal and informative assessment process, allowing judges to make robust comparisons and appraisals based on their immediate sensory experiences. The other options suggest various constraints that do not align with the standard practices of beer judging, which is built around the idea that individual judges best understand their own tasting process.

8. What can result from contamination by wild yeast in brewing?

- A. Unexpected off-flavors such as sourness**
- B. Increased carbonation levels**
- C. Uniform sweetness throughout the beer**
- D. Enhancements in hop aroma**

Contamination by wild yeast in brewing primarily leads to unexpected off-flavors, including sourness. Wild yeast strains, such as *Brettanomyces*, are often responsible for producing a range of flavor profiles that differ significantly from the clean, fermented flavors typically associated with standard brewing yeast like *Saccharomyces*. These wild yeasts can produce acids and other byproducts, resulting in a sour or funky character that many brewers seek in styles like sour ales or lambics, but which can be undesirable in other beer styles. The presence of wild yeast disrupts the intended fermentation process and can lead to unpredictable outcomes, making it a common concern for brewers aiming for consistency in their products. While some brewers embrace wild yeast for specific beer styles, its contamination in conventional brewing can lead to flavors that are not intended and can be considered flaws in certain beer categories.

9. What characteristic does a high carbonation level impart to beer?

- A. A smoother mouthfeel with less flavor**
- B. A livelier mouthfeel and enhanced aroma**
- C. A heavier body and increased bitterness**
- D. A flat and dull taste**

The correct answer highlights how high carbonation levels influence the sensory experience of beer. When carbonation is elevated, it creates a livelier mouthfeel. This effervescence can enhance the perception of aroma as the bubbles help to release volatile compounds, making the beer smell more vibrant and aromatic. Additionally, the tingling sensation of bubbles on the palate can contribute to a perception of freshness and brightness in the beer. Higher carbonation levels can also influence the overall perception of the beer's body, making it feel lighter and more refreshing. This contrasts with low carbonation, which can lead to a flat mouthfeel and a less engaging aromatic experience. By understanding this characteristic, brewers can manipulate carbonation levels to achieve their desired mouthfeel and aromatic profile in the final product.

10. Can a judge director not be eligible to serve as a judge if they have knowledge of the association between entries and entrants?

- A. True, they cannot serve as a judge**
- B. False, they can serve as a judge**
- C. True, but only for certain competitions**
- D. False, it depends on the entry category**

The correct response indicates that a judge director cannot serve as a judge if they possess knowledge of the association between entries and entrants. This principle is in place to ensure fairness and impartiality in judging competitions. When a judge is aware of which entries are associated with specific entrants, it can lead to biases, whether intentional or unintentional. In competitive environments like brewing contests, maintaining objectivity is crucial to uphold the integrity of the judging process. This rule helps to prevent conflicts of interest, ensuring that all entries are evaluated solely based on merit without any undue influence from personal relationships or prior knowledge. The other choices imply varying degrees of eligibility depending on specific conditions or competition types, which do not align with the overarching requirement for impartiality established within the judging guidelines. Therefore, the key emphasis is on the need for judges to be completely impartial, which is why knowledge of associations disqualifies judge directors.