

Does Your Coffee Gear Need an Upgrade?

By Liz Roquet

By now, you've probably become a pro at this new work-from-home lifestyle. It used to be when your alarm went off, so began your frenzied series of steps to get out the door to take on the day. Now, mornings require only a presentable appearance from the waist up and a thirty-second commute to the office. Of course, if you have kids learning from home, that's probably a next-level challenge never before imaged as you toggle between breakfast, meetings, technical problems, reports, and report cards.

No matter what your new morning routine is, it's undoubtedly changed from last winter when the pandemic landed in our lives. Maybe you're missing the stop at your favorite local café on the way to work, the deliciously brewed office coffee, or you just don't have the tools and time at home to make a great cup.

Even though these changes might be here to stay, you definitely don't have to settle for less than delicious coffee in your life. There are so many incredible coffee tools out there that will fit any sipping style and budget. Brewing for one? Love your latte? Sweet and fluffy? Black and simple? Here are a few of our favorite coffee tools to improve your home coffee game.



POUR-OVER BREWING

Easy, dependable, and incredible every time you brew. Pour-over brewing lets you stay in charge of your brew's flavor with control of your water temperature, pulse intervals, and brew time. The best part is you never waste coffee by brewing more than you'll drink. Want another cup? Brew a fresh batch in three minutes. Start with just a dripper, or build your pour-over brew bar to the max!

Volume: 1-2 cups
Time needed: 4 minutes
Styles: Glass, ceramic, plastic
Gear needed: Dripper, paper filters, water kettle
Cost: \$-\$\$



PRESS POT BREWING

In this immersion brew method, your coffee is completely underwater for 4 minutes, yielding an extraction that's rich, complete and heavy in body thanks to the non-dissolvable solids that pass through the screen. So simple, and depending on the pot size you purchase, you can brew for one or a crowd.

Volume: 1-8 cups
Time needed: 5 minutes
Styles: Glass, stainless steel
Gear needed: Press pot, water kettle
Cost: \$-\$\$



AEROPRESS

It is about as close as you can get to an espresso extraction without an espresso machine, featuring brewing with total immersion and pressure. It is incredibly versatile to brew various grind degrees, yielding everything from a dense and rich shot to an American style drip coffee. If you dream of your favorite barista's cappuccino, this brewer paired with a home milk frother can satisfy your craving without breaking the bank.

Volume: 1 cup
Time needed: 2 minutes
Styles: Plastic
Gear needed: Aeropress, paper filter, water kettle
Cost: \$



COFFEE GRINDER

The quality of your grind has the biggest impact on the flavor of your brewed coffee. Always use a burr grinder. Why? Blade grinders chop up the coffee, leaving you with "boulders and dust." The grind is inconsistent so that the flavor can be way off in your cup and inconsistent from day to day. Burr grinders create a consistent, repeatable, and adjustable grind, helping you get the most flavor in your cup today and every day. Adjust your grind for the type of coffee. Select fine-ground for short brew cycles (like espresso machines), medium ground for longer brew cycles (like drip machines), and more coarse for immersion brewing (like a French press).
Volume: 1-12 cups
Time needed: 1-2 minutes
Styles: Electric or manual
Gear needed: Grinder
Cost: \$-\$\$\$



ELECTRIC DRIP BREWERS

The tried-and-true option for batch brewing. Look for a Specialty Coffee Association approved brewer to ensure the machine can hold the correct water temperature, wet all the grounds, and keep the brewed pot hot without excessively heating from below.
Volume: 4-10 cup
Time needed: 6-7 minutes
Styles: Electric
Cost: \$\$-\$\$\$



CLEVER DRIPPER

A super easy brew method that combines immersion and pour-over brew techniques into one system. Pour hot water over grounds, stir after 30 seconds, and let brew another 3 minutes. Then simply place the dripper on top of your favorite coffee mug, and allow the coffee to filter through to completion. Because this uses a standard #4 filter, you can even brew large batches by using more coffee and brewing into a 32 or 48 oz thermos instead.
Volume: 1-8 cup
Time needed: 4-6 minutes
Styles: Plastic
Gear needed: Aeropress, paper filter, water kettle
Cost: \$



COLD BREW

One of the best things about cold brew coffee is that you can brew a batch and keep it in your fridge for up to two weeks. If you're always short on time, it's an excellent option for instant satisfaction. Mix the brewed concentrate with either water or milk, pour over ice, or (gasp) heat up in your microwave to enjoy hot. You'll be shocked at how great it tastes!
Time needed: 18 hours passive brew time, 30 seconds otherwise
Styles: Glass, metal, plastic
Gear needed: Brewer, storage carafe
Cost: \$-\$\$



MILK FROTHER

Missing the frothy micro-texture milk from your local café? Milk frothers can quickly produce hot textured milk, cold textured milk, no-foam hot milk, or delicious hot chocolate in one step. They work beautifully with alternative milks like oat, soy, and almond as well.
Volume: 1-2 cup
Time needed: 1-3 minutes
Styles: Electric
Cost: \$\$

Liz Roquet is the owner and roaster at Lizzy's Fresh Coffee in Ketchum, Idaho, a long-time sponsor of the Boulder Mountain Tour. Find more coffee tips, gear, and info about their nationwide shipping, roasted coffee, and coffee bar at www.lizzysfreshcoffee.com. Lizzy's is located at 410 10th St, A-3 in Ketchum.