

Homebrewing Equipment

It can be difficult deciding what equipment to start with. Homebrewing equipment can cost you anywhere between a couple hundred dollars and ten thousand dollars. More expensive does not necessarily mean better. As we mentioned in the last email, thousands of homebrewers make excellent beer out of converted pots and coolers every day. There are numerous options and designs, and we will walk you through the pro's and con's of each.

Disclaimer: Some of the links are affiliate links, which means we will get a small commission if you decide to purchase through the links at no extra cost. Although this product was chosen based on quality, for full transparency we have placed an asterisk next to the affiliate links.

Extract Brewing Kits

These are an excellent idea for anyone who is new to homebrewing. Extract is pre-made fermentable wort, so you skip the mashing process. The biggest advantage of extract brewing is it allows you to brew beer at the cheapest entry level. This allows you to get a taste of homebrewing without investing a \$1,000+ in all-grain equipment. The biggest disadvantage is that there is limited recipe flexibility. You can only brew styles based on the extracts that are available. We have included three of these kits from Northern Brewer below, along with a short description.

Northern Brewer Homebrew Starter Set

This is their cheapest option coming in at \$129.99. I would start with this one as it is the most cost efficient and comes with everything you need except bottles. You can choose either a hefeweizen, IPA, or amber beer recipe. You can find it at the link below.

[Northern Brewer Homebrew Starter Set*](#)

Northern Brewer Deluxe Homebrew Starter Set

Of the three, this is my least favorite option. It has some equipment upgrades from the first kit, but you still need to get a brew kettle and bottles. It costs \$249.99, and you can choose between a hefeweizen, brown ale, IPA, and irish red recipes. You can find this link below.

[Northern Brewer Deluxe Homebrew Starter Set*](#)

Northern Brewer Premium Starter Set

This is their most expensive set, coming in at \$379.99. The bulk of the cost for this kit is the brew kettle. It has additional equipment upgrades that are nice as you want to expand your brewing capacity. The link is below.

[Northern Brewer Premium Starter Set*](#)

All-Grain Systems

These systems cost considerably more, but they are necessary to have the flexibility to brew any style. Before we get into the systems, I have included a checklist of items you will need.

Required

- Kettles
- Burners
- Chillers
- Fermenters
- Thermometers
- Mash paddle
- Spray bottles
- Scale
- Malt Mill
- Motor or hand drill for malt mill
- One to two-gallon buckets for cleaning and sanitizing
- Powdered brewery wash (PBW)
- Sanitizer (star-san)
- Airlock or blow-off tube (depending on fermenter)
- Recipe ingredients (malt, hops, yeast, and water if not using tap water)

Optional

- Wort pumps and hoses
- Bottles, bottle capper, bottle caps, and bottling wand (if bottling)
- Soda, corny, or other kegs (if kegging)
- Refractometer
- Hydrometer

Making Your Own

These costs will vary, but I have included the link to an excellent YouTube video on how to convert a cooler into a mash tun [here](#). This can be a great way to transition into all-grain brewing. If you started with one of the extract kits, you can use the same kettle for boiling and the same fermenters for fermenting. If you have any questions on the brewing process or how to use a system like this, please feel free to respond to this email.

One Vessel System

These are a somewhat newer option, and it allows you to perform the mashing and boiling in one vessel. I have never used one of these myself, but the homebrewers I have talked to that use them like them. These are typically brew in a bag (BIAB), which is when you place a brew bag in your strike water and mash into that. This allows you to remove the bag after mashing, like removing a tea bag, and continue on with the boiling. You can make your own BIAB system with a brew bag and a stainless steel pot, or you can order one, like this [one](#)* from Clawhammer. It is significantly more expensive to buy one as opposed to making one yourself, but the benefit of one like Clawhammer's is that it has precise temperature control, an internal heating element, and all the various attachments. There are other single vessel systems available, so I encourage you to look around for the best fit for you.

2- and 3-Vessel Systems

These are the most advanced and expensive systems you can get. The two companies I like are [SS Brewtech](#) and [Blichmann](#). These systems range anywhere from \$2,000 to \$6,000, which does not include fermenting vessels or kegging/bottling equipment. Most homebrewers slowly add to their collections and will purchase one or two pieces of these systems at a time when they have the money and need an upgrade. These systems are absolutely not required to make delicious beer.

Closing

All of the above methods will make high quality beer if you follow the brewing process and practice good cleaning and sanitation. Don't fall into the trap of thinking the most expensive setup is automatically the best. Many gold medalists and best in show winners use converted coolers and other homemade attachments. Cheers!