Hopped mead

A modern still mead with a small Saaz hop-tea addition. It is designed as a restrained herbal experiment; the precise bitterness has not been measured.



Original modern formulation; not test-brewed. Designed as dry, still mead.

5.0 L of prepared must before yeast rehydration; approximately 4-4.5 L bottled after sampling and sediment losses, not guaranteed.

Ingredients

• 1.20 kg mild blossom honey

• 3.0 g Saaz hop pellets, labelled 2-5% alpha acids

• 500 mL potable water for the hop tea, counted inside the final 5.0 L

• Additional potable water to bring honey plus strained hop tea to exactly 5.0 L

• 2.0 g Lalvin 71B wine yeast

• 50 mL clean water for yeast rehydration (additional to the 5.0 L must)

• Fermaid O: calculate the total in grams from the measured OG using the linked TOSNA method; see step 4

Equipment

• 8 L or larger food-grade fermentation vessel with lid, bung and airlock

• Smaller glass maturation vessels with airlocks, sized to leave little headspace after transfers

• Hydrometer, sample cylinder and thermometer

• Scales reading 1 g for honey and 0.1 g for yeast, nutrients and hops

• Food-contact cleaner and brewing sanitizer, used at their labelled dilution and contact time

• Sanitized spoon, funnel, siphon and tubing; suitable still-wine bottles and matching closures

• Small saucepan, sanitized fine sieve or fine brewing filter bag

METHOD / PREPARATION & EARLY FERMENTATION

Build a measured batch

01 Clean, sanitize and measure

Clean off visible residue, then sanitize all equipment that touches cooled must or mead. Follow the sanitizer label. Calibrate a 5 L mark in the fermenter before starting. Keep a written batch log.

02 Prepare the 5.0 L must

Bring 500 mL water to a boil in a saucepan. Add 3.0 g Saaz pellets and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and cool, then strain through a sanitized fine sieve or brewing filter bag. Dissolve the honey in cool potable water, add all the strained tea and top up to exactly 5.0 L total. Cool to 18-21°C before measuring OG. This measured pre-fermentation addition is the entire hop dose; do not dry-hop or add more tea at bottling.

03 Record the starting gravity

When the prepared must is at 18-21°C and mixed evenly, measure original gravity (OG) with a hydrometer, applying its temperature correction if required. Do not pour the sample back. Use the actual reading for the nutrient plan; predicted strength is not a measured alcohol content.

04 Calculate the Fermaid O schedule

Use the linked TOSNA calculator for 5.0 L, the measured OG and Lalvin 71B (low nitrogen demand); follow its fruit adjustment instructions where relevant. Record the calculated total in grams and divide it into four portions. This amount is deliberately conditional on the measured must, rather than a universal spoonful. Do not substitute another nutrient by weight.

05 Prepare and pitch the yeast

Rehydrate 2.0 g Lalvin 71B in 50 mL clean water at 35-37°C for 20 minutes. Gradually add small amounts of must until the temperature difference is no more than 10°C; keep the total rehydration period within 45 minutes. Mix into the must and fit the airlock. Follow the current yeast label if it differs.

Let measurements guide the timing

06 Manage the early fermentation

Keep at 18-21°C. Add the four Fermaid O portions at about 24, 48 and 72 hours, then at the one-third sugar break or day 7, whichever comes first. Check gravity during this period. If the sugar break arrives earlier, complete the planned early additions by then. For this schedule, the break is approximately SG = 1 + (OG - 1) × 2/3. Gently release dissolved gas before each addition and mix the powder with a little must; add slowly to prevent foaming over. Avoid splashing after this early stage.

07 Confirm progress, then transfer

Allow several weeks as a planning estimate, but use measurements rather than the calendar or airlock bubbles. These recipes aim for a dry finish, commonly near or below SG 1.000. Check for the same reading on three occasions spanning at least two weeks at fermentation temperature. A high or sweet stable reading may indicate a stall; investigate it and keep the vessel airlocked. Stable gravity alone is not a guarantee of microbiological or bottle stability.

08 Mature under airlock

Once dry and no longer changing, siphon gently off the sediment into sanitized, appropriately sized vessels with little headspace. Do not dilute just to fill a large vessel. Allow about 2-3 months or longer for settling and flavour development; check airlocks regularly. Time and clarity are not substitutes for fermentation checks.

09 Bottle still

Check gravity again before bottling and compare with the earlier readings. Bottle only the completed dry batch, with no renewed activity and no unresolved fermentation problem. Use sanitized bottles and suitable closures. Add no honey, juice or priming sugar. If there is doubt, keep it under airlock and seek brewing advice. To make a serving sweeter, add honey only to that glass immediately before drinking; never return it to the storage batch.

Maturation and serving

The hop dose is a formulation choice, not a tested bitterness specification. Record the packet alpha-acid value and use the same product when comparing batches.

It contains no malt, so it is not a braggot. Hop aroma can change during fermentation and maturation; taste and record the result without treating the description as a guaranteed outcome.

Keep this page with your batch

These sources support the brewing methods and terminology. They do not establish that this exact formula has been test-brewed. Nutrient quantity depends on the measured must and the named product.

BJCP 2026 Mead Style Guidelines

https://www.bjcp.org/style/2026/mead/

American Homebrewers Association — How to Make Mead

https://homebrewersassociation.org/tutorials/how-to-make-mead/how-to-make-mead/

Lallemand — Lalvin 71B Technical Data Sheet

https://admin.lallemandbrewing.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/71B-TDS-ENG-Lalvin.pdf

Mead Made Right — Nutrient Additions

https://www.meadmaderight.com/nutrient-additions

Mead Made Right — TOSNA Calculator

https://www.meadmaderight.com/tosna-calculator

University of Minnesota — Practical Preparation Techniques For Wine Bottling

https://enology.umn.edu/wine-winemaking/practical-preparation-techniques-wine-bottling

Batch notes

Start date / batch ID	_____
Honey / juice / fruit / hops	_____
Original gravity / temperature	_____
Fermaid O total / portions	_____
Final gravity readings / dates	_____
Transfer / bottling dates	_____
Tasting notes	_____