

Legs & Head of a Good Brew
Understanding brewing terms used in taste testing & competitions
Baroness Verena Entenwirth- Middle Kingdom

With terms like Head, Body, and Legs you could be talking about a beauty contest- but in these terms we are looking for the finest glass of homebrew you can imagine. From Absence of off odors to Taste appropriate to type, come learn some of the brewing terms used most often in SCA and modern world judging.

I. Introduction

This class is made to be a beginners guide to entering brewing competition in the Middle Kingdom/SCA and to help clear up some of the criteria and terms used in brewing competitions.

II. Common Definitions

A. Components

1. Acid- Detectable presence of sourness normally in wine
2. Alcohol- Detectable presence of ethanol in the beverage
3. Carbonation-Fizz due to CO₂
4. Clarity-Quality of being clear. Lack of sediment
5. Color-The pigmentation of the liquid within the brew
6. Head Quality-The foam quality on the top portion of the beverage
7. Hop Characteristic-Bitterness and aroma from hops if used/
8. Lacing-Pattern left by the head as it moves down the glass
9. Legs-A visible indicator of a drinks weight

B. Feel

1. Body-Texture or viscosity in the mouth
2. Finish-The feel and the taste in the mouth after the liquid has left the mouth
3. Tannin-The dry feeling in the mouth.

C. Smell

1. Aroma-Components perceived by the nose of both scent and flavor
2. Bouquet-A characteristic or particular scent

D. Taste

1. Aftertaste-Lingering flavor after the liquid has left the palate
2. Flavor- Taste
3. Sugar- Amount of sweetness or taste of the sweetening agent
4. Sugar/Alcohol Balance-Sweetness to ethanol balance
5. Sweet/Dry balance-Sweet to non-sweet balance as determined by the beverage
6. Sweetness-Noticeability of the sugars
7. Taste-Sensation of flavor as perceived in the mouth and throat

E. Other

1. Presentation-The manner in which the beverage is displayed

2. Documentation-The history of beverage type as well as the creation process

F. "Off"

1. Acetaldehyde-Grassy, Acetic
2. Alcoholic- Hot, Spicy, Vinous, Warming or Burn in throat
3. Astringent-Dry, High Tannin, Puckering
4. Bitterness-Felt on back on tongue and roof of mouth
5. Buttery-Mouthfeel, slickness on palate, butterscotch
6. Cardboard- Stale bread, cardboard, wet paper. Wood like aftertaste
7. Cooked Corn-Vegetable or oyster like flavoring
8. Fruitiness-Esters or any fruit like flavoring
9. Light Body-Water or weak
10. Grassy-Fresh cut grass
11. Grainy-Spent grain, starchy, cereal like
12. Phenoli- Plastic or medicinal
13. Musty: Earthy, musty, cellar like
14. Sourness: Tart, Sour, Vinegar like
15. Solvent Like:Pungent, harsh, acetone like
16. Sulfury: rotten eggs, burnt rubber,
17. Sweet:Sugary, Syrupy

III. Terms and Their Point Structure

Term	ATS	Speciality	Wines	Beer	Midreal m	IKBG
Absence of Off Odors.		X	X	X	6	
Absence of Off Tastes	*			X	8	
Acid.			X		3	10
Aftertaste	*	4	8	10		
Aftertaste and finish		X	X	X		10
Alcohol	*	4	3	IKBG		10
Aroma and Bouquet		X	X			10
Body	*			X	8	
Body and finish	*	6	8			
Bouquet	*	X	X		6	
Carbonation				X		10

Clarity	*	4	4	2	2	
Color	*	4	4	1	1	
Color and Clarity		X	X	X		10
Flavor and Body		X	X	X		10
Freedom from off odors		X				10
General Flavor	*	X			6	
Head Quality.				X	2	
Hop or non-hop character	*			X		10
Lacing.				X	1	
Lack of off flavors:		X				10
Legs	*	X	X		2	
Malt and Hops/Fruit Aroma				X	6	
Nose and freedom from off odors					X	
Presentation		2	2	IKBG	2	10
Sugar			X		3	
Sugar/Alcohol Balance	*	X			4	
Sweet / dry balance:				X		10
Sweetness	*	X	X			10
Tannin.			X		3	10
Taste	*		8	10		

IV. ATS- Appropriate to Style or Type

V. Preparing your docs for tasting.

- A. Include the minimum documentation of WHO would have drank it WHEN and in WHAT environment
- B. Include the minimum steps of HOW and WHEN and WHAT you used to make the brew
- C. Describe HOW the the TYPE of drink should taste.
- D. If you have any "off" keywords, describe if they are appropriate to the style of beverage you created (ATS)

VI. Why all the other items

- A. Several standard glasses appropriate to the time/place or drink style (to drink out of) with clear unornamented glass bowls (to toss extra liquids)
- B. A white tablecloth, either plastic or cloth. (presentation and to help judge color)
- C. Taper candle with matches. (to check the clarity)
- D. Lemon slices, fresh white bread and/or unsalted crackers. (to cleanse the palate)
- E. Distilled water and water glasses (to cleanse the palate)
- F. Bucket for disposal of excess liquids.
- G. Corkscrews and bottle openers.