



HopTech
6398 Dougherty Rd Ste 18
Dublin, CA 94568

www.hoptech.com
1-925 875-0246
Fax: 1-925-875-0248

Instructions for Using HopTech Hop Bags and Weights

HopTech's Hop Bag and Weight System is primarily designed for dry hopping. Dry hopping is the process of adding fresh whole or pelletized hops to beer to impart a fresh hop aroma. Our hop bags can also be used for containing either whole or pellet hops during the boil, but your utilization will suffer somewhat due to the fact that the hops won't be as vigorously tossed around in the boil. You can also use the large bag to steep grains.

IMPORTANT:

Our hop bags have "sizing" in them to make them stiff and therefore easier to sew. Although this sizing is not toxic or harmful in any way, it doesn't taste very good. Therefore it is important that you remove the sizing from the bags before the initial usage. This is easily done by boiling the bags for a few minutes and then rinsing them well. This will also have the added benefit of sterilizing the bags. The dye in the string will also be removed during the boil.

Using the HopTech Hop Bag and Weights for Dry Hopping

The HopTech Hop Bag and Weight System is designed to keep the hops suspended in the middle of the beer. This is ideal for maximum extraction of the hop aroma. The hop bags are made of 100% cotton and will last for many brews with care, but they are somewhat of a hassle to clean, and cheap enough to be considered disposable. The mesh is fine enough to contain hop pellet particles, so you can now dry hop with pellets and not worry about getting the particles in your beer or clogging your beer lines. The weight is made from 100% Teflon and should last forever. It will not scratch plastic, glass or stainless steel fermenters as metal weights might.

For more information on the subject of dry hopping, we suggest you read Mark Garetz's article in the Summer '93 issue of *Zymurgy* magazine entitled *Boost Hop Bouquet with Dry Hopping* or get Mark's book *Using Hops*, due to be published in early 1994.

The first step is to put the hops in the bag and pull the drawstring and tie it shut. If you plan to re-use the bag, use a knot that can easily be untied, like you would tie your shoes with, but be sure it is tight. The large bag will hold quite a lot of pellets, far too many for most batch sizes. The small bag will hold up to 3/4 of an ounce of pellets. It looks like it will hold a lot more, but the pellets will expand quite a bit once they are wet. If you want to dry hop with more than 3/4 of an ounce, use multiple bags. For whole hops, the small bag will hold from 1/3 to 1/2 ounce depending on how much you stuff it. The large bag will hold up to two ounces of whole hops. If you are using a glass carboy, it is important that you not over-fill the large bag. The hops will expand when wet and you might not be able to get the bag out even if you could get it in. If you want a lot of hops, it's best to use multiple bags and weights.

Once you have the hops in the bag, tie the loose end of the drawstring to the weight, using the hole in one end of the weight. If you are dry hopping in a glass carboy secondary, use the weight to push the hop bag through the opening. Important: If your carboy neck is a small one, you may only be able to get one ounce of whole hops in the large bag. It is strongly suggested you test the bag and amount of hops using an empty carboy before you find out it won't fit with an open carboy of beer. It also helps to wet the hop bag and hops first with water. Don't worry about

losing the hop aroma. You can add the hop bag with weight to a full carboy or an empty one and then rack the beer onto the bag and weight. If you add it to an empty carboy, we suggest you lie the carboy on its side and insert the bag and weight, and then slowly tilt the carboy upright. This will keep the weight from crashing to the bottom, possibly breaking the carboy. Although the weight is plastic it is still heavy and it's best not to take chances. If you are dry-hopping in a stainless keg, then it's an easy matter to drop the weight and bag through the opening.

Note that due to the small amount of air that gets trapped in the hops and the bag, the large size bag may float for a while, especially if you put a full two ounces of whole hops in the bag. This is normal and the bag will sink in a day or so.

To remove the bag and weight from a carboy, first drain all the liquid you can. Now slowly tilt the carboy so that the weight slides down the side. Jockey the carboy until the end of the weight falls through the hole. Grab the weight and gently but firmly use it to pull the bag through the neck. It helps to twist the bag if it is a tight fit. Do this whole procedure as low to the ground as possible and preferably on a vinyl tile floor or other soft surface in case you accidentally drop the carboy. If you over-filled the bag so that the hops have expanded to the point where you can't get the bag out, get as much of the bag in the neck as you can. Then while keeping tension on the bag by pulling on the weight, slice the bag open with a sharp knife. Be sure not to cut the string. Shake the bag, again using the weight and string, to get some hops to fall out of the bag. Keep this up until you can remove the bag, then rinse out the hops. But don't say we didn't warn you about over-filling the bag!

If you wish to re-use the bags, you'll need to rinse out the hop particles. This is easiest to do if you turn the bag inside out and run water into the bag. Be sure to let the bag air dry thoroughly so that mold and/or mildew doesn't grow on it.

Sanitation:

There is no need to worry that adding fresh hops to your beer will cause any infections, *if you add them to the secondary or later*. This is because the low pH of the beer and the alcohol that is now present will inhibit the growth of any organisms on the hops. The bags and weights are best sanitized by boiling them for a few minutes in water. The weight could be sanitized with either bleach or iodophor, but we don't recommend you do this with the bags as you cannot be sure you have rinsed the sanitizer out. If you dry the bags thoroughly after the initial boil (to remove the sizing) and then keep them in a baggy or other dust-free and clean container, you shouldn't need to worry about sanitizing the bag right before use.