FREE FROM THE LIFESTYLE EDGE · BY TIM RENO

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SUPPLY

The 5-Minute Coffee Fix

Bitter, sour or weak coffee? Nearly always it's one of three things. Fix these and your next cup will taste like it came from a café.

The 3 rules

1

Fresh whole beans

Grind right before you brew. Ground coffee goes stale fast — this one change makes the biggest difference.

2

The 1:16 ratio

1 g coffee for every 16 g water — about **2 tablespoons per 6 oz**. Stronger: 1:15. Lighter: 1:17.

3

Hot, clean water

Filtered water at 195–205°F — just off the boil. No thermometer? Boil, then wait 30 seconds.

What's wrong with my coffee?

If it tastes...	Why	Fix it
Bitter, harsh	Over-extracted — water pulled out too much	Grind coarser · brew a little shorter · let water cool 30 sec · clean your maker
Sour, thin	Under-extracted — not enough flavor pulled out	Grind finer · brew a little longer · use hotter water
Weak, watery	Too little coffee for the water	Use more coffee (try 1:15) · grind slightly finer
Too strong	Too much coffee for the water	Use less coffee (try 1:17) — don't just add water after
Flat, papery, stale	Old beans or pre-ground coffee	Buy whole beans · store airtight · use within a few weeks of opening

Grind size

French press, cold brew	**Coarse · sea salt**
Drip coffee maker	**Medium · sand**
Pour-over, AeroPress	**Medium-fine · table salt**
Espresso	**Fine · powdered sugar**

My go-to recipes

Drip: 2 tbsp medium grind per 6 oz water.

Pour-over: 22 g medium-fine, bloom 30 sec, pour to 350 g in 3–4 min.

French press: coarse, 1:15, steep 4 min, press slowly, pour right away.

Espresso: 18 g in, about 36 g out, in 25–30 sec.

Store it right

Airtight, away from heat and light. Skip the fridge — beans soak up moisture and smells.

Not sure which coffee you'd like?

Take the 30-second Coffee Match quiz on the site and I'll match you to a coffee and roast.

Want to taste what I'm drinking?

A new limited coffee every month · 1 lb whole bean · $22.49 · free shipping in the continental U.S.

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