

Cost of Brewing, Part 2
Ray Gallagher
(September 2007)

Below is a summary of the initial review of costs of home brewing beer:

Cost per bottle of beer

Extract	All-Grain	Grocery	Brewpub	Restaurant
\$0.46	\$0.40	\$1.20	\$3.00 - \$4.00	\$5.00+

Of course, these articles are not intended to be submitted to the Economists Association/Society Yearly (EASY) publication; however, they will evaluate some of the items that should be included in an evaluation.

As most home brewers know, including just the cost of actual ingredients would not tell the whole story of brewing. Some of the other re-occurring or soft costs associated with home brewing include: bottles, tops, cleaning, sanitizer, gas, and miscellaneous materials, tools and supplies.

To make all economic analysis on the same playing field, we need to use EAC. (Equivalent Annualized Costs). In other words, those items that are reused from batch to batch will be “averaged” over 10 years. I’ll assume that a five-gallon batch will be brewed every four weeks, or 13 batches per year, or 598 bottles per year, or 5980 bottles per 10 years. This is a simplified approach, but I have to evaluate costs over a set period of time.

Fixed, reusable costs

BOTTLES, a case of new 12 ounce of bottles costs about \$13. Of course you can accumulate some empty long neck bottles by buying a case of beer from the grocery store or go dumpster diving. I’d suggest you have at least 72 bottles on hand for brewing. Cost = \$ 39.00 / 5980 bottles = \$0.01 bottle.

FILLER, a bottle filler costs about \$ 3.00. Cost = \$3. / 5980 bottles = \$ 0.001/ bottle

TUBING/MISCELLANEOUS: Tubing, and miscellaneous supplies. Assumed costs Costs = \$5 / 5980 bottles = \$ 0.001/ bottle

FERMENTORS/VESSELS. The average cost of a five-gallon glass carboy or bucket is \$20. I’d suggest two vessels, one used as a primary and the other as a secondary fermenting vessel. Costs = \$ 40 / 5980 bottles = \$0.01 / bottle

Soft Costs

CLEANING SUPPLIES: Suggested cleaning supplies like Powdered Brewers Wash costs in the range of \$10 per 10 batches, or \$1 / batch, Cost = \$1 / 46 bottles = \$0.02 per bottle.

SANITIZER SUPPLIES: Suggested sanitizer usage is about \$10 per 5 batches of Star-San sanitizer. Cost = \$2 / 46 bottles = \$0.04 per bottle.

GAS (FUEL) SUPPLIES: I've measured my gas usage for an average batch of beer and I've come up with an average of \$ 1.20 per batch. Cost = \$1.2 / 46 bottles = \$0.03 per bottle.

Factoring supplies and reusable materials and tools I'll add another \$0.11 per bottle to cost of brewing your own home brew:

Extract	All-Grain	Grocery	Brewpub	Restaurant
\$0.57	\$0.51	\$1.20	\$3.00 - \$4.00	\$5.00+

Of course, these costs to homebrew do not include all costs. Next time I'll include and discuss other costs such as investments in basic kettles, burners and more complicated brewing setups. Until then, have a homebrew and, cheers.