

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance	
Clarity	clear – slightly hazy – hazy/cloudy – opaque
Colour	straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black – other
Foam	none – small – medium – large
Other observations	e.g. head retention (foam stand), head (foam) colour, sediment
Nose	
Intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas
Palate	
Carbonation	none – low – medium – high
Body	light – medium – full
Alcohol	low – medium – high – very high
Bitterness	none – low – medium – high
Sweetness	dry – off-dry – medium – sweet
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aroma from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas
Finish	short – medium – long
Other observations	e.g. acidity, texture, astringency, warming sensation, lingering bitterness
Conclusions	
Quality	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding

WSET Level 2 Beer-Lexicon

Supporting the WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Describing aroma	
Aromas from malt and grain	
Bread	bread dough, water cracker, bread crumb, bread crust, digestive biscuit/graham cracker, toasted bread, burnt bread
Sweet/confectionery	honey, caramel, candy floss (cotton candy), toffee, black treacle (molasses)
Dried fruit	raisin, prune, date, dried fig
Nut/bean	toasted nut, chocolate, coffee, cocoa
Smoke	woodsmoke, smoked bacon, smoked cheese
Aromas from hops	
Floral	rose, geranium, lavender, jasmine, elderflower, blossom, chamomile
Berry	strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry, blueberry
Pome fruit	apple, pear
Citrus fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin, bergamot
Stone fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine, cherry, plum
Tropical fruit	lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple, papaya, guava, coconut
Herbaceous	grass, rocket (arugula), blackcurrant leaf, lemongrass, hay
Herbal	mint, dill, sage, thyme, fennel, basil, black tea, green tea
Other	pine, resin, spice, earth, forest floor, onion, garlic, cedar, peppercorn
Aromas from yeast and bacteria	
Fruit	apple, pear, lemon, orange, grapefruit, strawberry, grape, apricot, cherry, peach, banana, pineapple, rhubarb, fig, dried fruit
Spice	clove, nutmeg, white peppercorn, black peppercorn, aniseed
Farmyard	hay, horse blanket, leather, earth, damp wool
Other	vinegar, bubblegum, fruit candy, nail varnish, liquorice
Other aromas	
Oak	vanilla, coconut, almond, smoke, cinnamon, toffee
Fruit and other additions	raspberry, cherry, blueberry, blackberry, grape, apricot, peach, plum, marzipan, rhubarb, coriander seed, other
Ageing	dried fruit, toffee, caramel, Port, tobacco
Possible off-flavours/off-aromas	
Acetaldehyde	green apple, raw pumpkin, emulsion paint
Diacetyl	butter, buttered popcorn
Dimethyl sulfide (DMS)	cooked sweetcorn, cooked cabbage, tomato juice
Staling	papery, stale, wet cardboard
Light struck	skunk, cat urine, scorched hair
Phenolic off-flavours	clove, medicinal, smoke
Bacterial contamination	rancid butter, vinegar, cooked cabbage