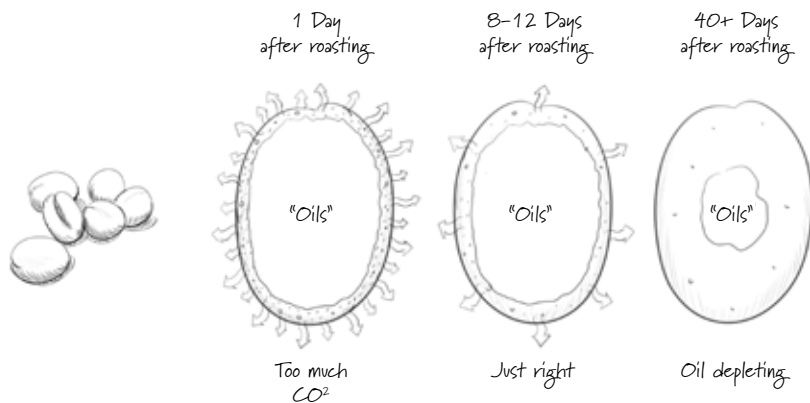


Sage[®]

Go for the smaller bag of beans, and be sure to check the roasting date!

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You've got a fab machine with a grinder inside,
but without fresh beans, you're only half way there.



You probably know that pre-ground beans are stale before you even get them home, but whole beans have a use-by-date too. Most of the whole beans in the U.K. are imported into Europe as green beans and then roasted. It's at this point, the roasted date, that they quickly begin to change chemically. During the first four or five days, the roasted beans are actively releasing a lot of carbon dioxide which makes them unsuitable for brewing until they're approximately a week old. They then start to go stale no matter how they're stored and, soon after, lose their rich, sweet and creamy oils.

So the optimum time to use your beans is between about 10 and 30 days after roasting.

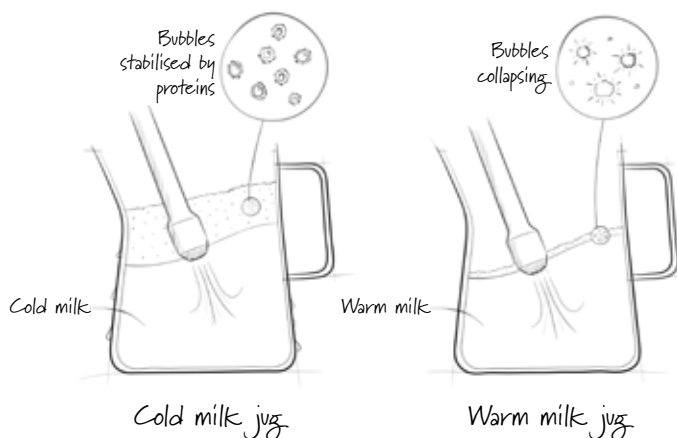
TIP

Check the 'roasted on' date on the bag and if it doesn't have one don't buy it as it's almost certainly not fresh (your best chance is at your local café – the one with the queue out the door!).

Try to buy one small bag at a time so that you can use it all within a few weeks. You won't believe how much difference freshly roasted beans make.

For silkier, creamier froth, store your frothing jug in the fridge.

Like all good coffee machines, this one uses steam to froth the milk.
Colder milk froths much easier than warm milk.



As the hot water vapour hits the milk it condenses and then unfolds the whey proteins, turning them into foam. The foam only collapses when gravity pulls the liquid from the bubble wall. The warmer the milk the less able it is to hold the foam making it collapse on itself before the foam is properly formed.

TIP

So always use cold milk just out of the fridge and a cold frothing jug (storing the jug in the fridge with the milk works great).

It may sound pedantic, but the jug can transfer temperature to the milk really quickly so try to keep it cool, especially if you're making a couple of cups in a row. It's not always practical to put it in the fridge between uses when you're entertaining, but make sure you rinse it out under cold water each time to cool it back down before you froth a new jug of milk.

When frothing, start with the bottom of the steam wand just below the surface of the milk so you introduce air and create small bubbles on the surface (if it makes big bubbles you're holding it too far out of the milk), then as the jug starts to feel warm, lower the steam wand all the way into the milk on a slight angle to circulate the froth into the body of the milk.

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