



Brewer's Update - Converting An Ice Chest Mashing and sparging made easier

By Sonya Sultan

I never imagined that I would be able to brew all-grain beers in my 350 sq. ft. apartment. Some of us do have space limitations to think about. However, my new Coleman Cooler will become my best brewing partner, serving as a mashing and sparging vessel, as well as a coffee table in my studio apartment.

When the idea was first suggested to me, I had no idea where to start. I began at Orchard Supply Hardware. A 48 quart cooler will allow me to advance from my present 5 gallons to 10 gallon batches in the future. I will also be able to brew high gravity beers like barley wines. Making sure the cooler had a drain plug, I measured the inner dimensions of the cooler and purchased the following:

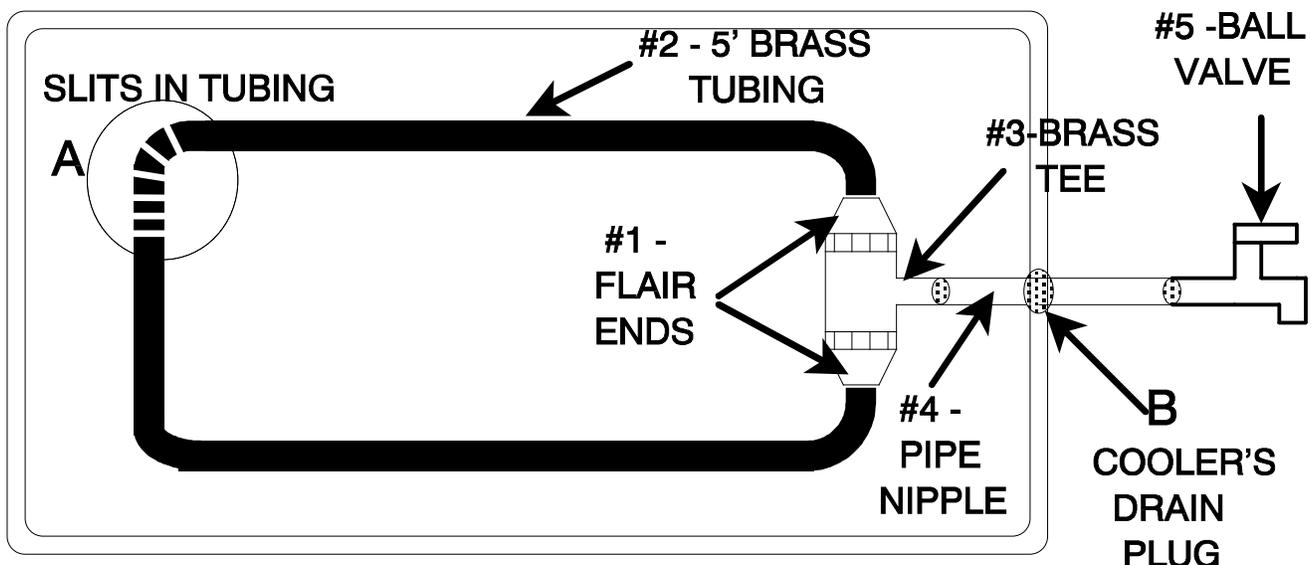
- #1. 2 - 1/4" to 3/8" brass flare fittings (crushed fittings work as well.)
- #2. 5 ft. of 3/8" copper tubing
- #3. 1/4" brass tee
- #4. 1/4" x 2 1/2" brass pipe nipple
- #5. 1/4" brass ball valve

These parts can be found at any Hardware store. I spent \$20.00 on the cooler and my total cost was about \$35.00.

I attached the flare fittings (#1) to the copper tubing (#2) using a flaring tool. (This isn't necessary if you have crushed fittings.) Being careful not to kink the copper tubing, I bent it in an oval circle and cut slits (approximately 1/3 of the depth of the tubing and about 3/4" apart) into it using a hacksaw (A). The 1/4" tee was attached between both flares and screwed onto the pipe nipple (#4) which fits through the drain plug (B). Next, I attached the ball valve to the pipe nipple and SHAZAM, I'm ready to brew!

Using hot water from a boil kettle you can mash right into the cooler and sparge from the same kettle as well. With gravity and the ball valve your wort will flow out of the cooler, leaving grain behind. This assembly also removes as one single unit for easy cleanup. Not only that, but you can carry your homebrew in your ice chest to parties, picnics, or to my house for the next Worthog meeting (Yeah, right!)

HAPPY BREWING HOGS!



VIEW OF COOLER BOTTOM

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