

draught beer glossary

Acid cleaner – Although several blends of acid cleaners are recommended to assist in beer stone and water stone removal, some acids react with system components. Phosphoric acid-based blends are the only ones safe on all materials.

Balance – Ensuring that the applied pressure matches the system requirements so that the beer dispenses at the optimum rate of about 2 ounces per second or 1 gallon per minute while maintaining brewery-specified carbonation level.

Barrier Tubing – Plastic tubing with a lining of nylon or PET that provides a gas barrier to better protect the beer from oxidation.

Beer Pumps – A mechanical pump that is generally driven by compressed air or CO₂ that can move beer great distances without changing the dissolved gases.

Beer Stone- Calcium Oxalate – A mineral deposit that forms slowly on a surface from beer and is very difficult to remove.

Caustic or Caustic Soda or NaOH – Sodium hydroxide – a high pH chemical commonly used in blending draught line cleaning solutions that will react with organic deposits in the draught beer line. Very effective, but also very dangerous. Commonly used in oven cleaners.

Caustic Potash or KOH or Potassium Hydroxide - Similar to sodium hydroxide, but offers slightly different chemical properties in a blended cleaning solution.

CO₂ – Carbon Dioxide, a natural product of fermentation and the gas used to push beer in draught beer systems. CO₂ leaks in the gas system are dangerous because high concentrations of CO₂ will displace air and cause asphyxiation.

CO₂ Volumes – The concentration of CO₂ in beer expressed as volumes of gas at standard conditions per volume of beer.

Coil Box – A cooling system to bring beer to serving temperature at the point of dispense consisting of a coil of stainless steel immersed in ice water. Often used at picnics or events where normal keg temperature cannot be maintained.

Cold Plate – A cooling system to bring beer to serving temperature at the point of dispense consisting of a stainless steel coil embedded in an aluminum plate in contact with the ice. Cooling is the result of melting the ice rather than just heat transfer, so water must be drained away from the cold plate. Often used at picnics or events where normal keg temperature cannot be maintained.

Coupler – The connector to the keg.

Dewar – An insulated, pressurized container for liquefied gas such as CO₂.

Direct Draw – A draught beer system that has a short jumper connection from the keg to the faucet.

EDTA – Ethylene Diamine Tetracetic Acid – A cleaning solution additive that can dissolve calcium mineral deposits in draught beer systems.

Faucet – The dispensing end of the draught beer system that controls the flow of beer.

Flash Chillers – Mechanical cooling systems to bring beer to serving temperature at the point of dispense. Often used with flash-pasteurized kegs that can be stored at room temperature.

FOB – Foam on Beer detector. A device that stops the flow of beer when the keg is empty before the beer line is filled with foam.

Glycol or Propylene Glycol – A food-grade refrigerant that is re-circulated through insulated tubing bundles to maintain beer temperature.

ISBT – International Society of Beverage Technologists who created a quality standard for CO₂ for beverage use.

Jockey Box – A cooler with a coiling coil or cold plate and faucets to chill the beer at the point of dispense.

John Guest Fittings – A specific brand of quick connect for stiff plastic tubing.

Jumper Tubing – The flexible piece of vinyl tubing that is used between the keg and draught beer system that should be replaced annually.

Lift – The change in height from the keg to the faucet that is a component of system balance.

Line – Tubing that makes up the draught beer flow path.

Long Draw – A draught beer system over 50 feet long that uses barrier tubing in a refrigerated bundle that typically requires a mixed gas to avoid over-carbonation.

Nitrogen Generator – A system designed to separate nitrogen from compressed air, typically by membrane. Nitrogen used for beer dispense in a mixed gas application must be >99% pure.

NSF – National Sanitation Foundation: An organization that certifies food service equipment for performance and cleanability.

Party Pump or Picnic Pump - A hand pump that uses compressed air to dispense beer. This type of pump should only be used when the entire keg is going to be dispensed at one time, because oxygen will damage the beer.

PE – Polyethylene – Stiffer tubing used in older refrigerated bundles (this oxygen-permeable material contributed to oxidation of the beer remaining in the lines and is now only recommended for use as glycol tubing).

Pot – Pressure Pot, Cleaning Pot – A canister for cleaning solution or rinse water that is connected to a pressure source pushing the solution through the lines like beer. Does not give sufficient velocity for (mechanical) cleaning, so this should only be used on short lines with longer chemical exposure.

PSI – Pounds per Square Inch. A unit of measure of gas pressure.

PSIA – Pounds per Square Inch, Absolute. A measure of gas pressure against a perfect vacuum so it includes the atmospheric pressure of 14.7 psi at sea level.

PSIG – Pounds per Square Inch, Gauge. A measure of gas pressure against the atmospheric pressure, typically seen on gas regulator gauges. Since atmospheric pressure varies with altitude, the gauge pressure must be adjusted with altitude.

PVC – Polyvinyl Chloride – Flexible jumper tubing.

Regulator – A gas control valve that delivers a set gas pressure regardless of tank pressure. There may be a primary regulator on the gas source and a secondary regulator at the gas connection for each keg.

Resistance (or System/Component/Line Resistance) – A measure of the pressure drop across a component or over a length of tubing at the optimum beer flow rate.

Sanitizer – An EPA-registered product that is designed to kill microorganisms.

Sankey – This term refers to the modern style of keg coupler. It is available in several versions to fit specific styles of keg valves produced in Europe and the USA.

Sequestrants – Chemicals that hold metal ions in solution and prevent mineral deposits.

Series Kegs – Hooking multiple kegs together so the beer from the first flows through the second and then into the next so that the kegs can be changed less frequently.

Shank – The connecting piece that goes through the cold box wall or tower and connects the tubing and tailpiece to the tap. It also can help provide system pressure reduction.

Short Draw – A draught system under 50 ft. long that can be run on straight CO₂ or mixed gas, and can use air-cooled or refrigerated lines.

Surfactants – Compounds used in blended draught beer line cleaners that lower surface tension to enhance surface wetting, break the bond between deposits and the tubing surface and suspend soils in cleaning solution so they can be removed.

Tail Pieces – The connectors that allow a piece of tubing to be attached to a piece of equipment.

Tap – The connector from the draught system to the keg (more properly referred to as a coupler).

Tavern Head – The connector from the draught system to the keg (more properly referred to as a coupler).

Tower – The mount on the bar that holds the faucets and is cooled to maintain beer temperature up to the point of dispense.

Water Conditioners – A component of a blended cleaner that is intended to carry away soils.

Water Stone – Calcium Carbonate – A mineral deposit that forms from water that can be removed with acid. ■