

Espresso Dial-In Cheat Sheet

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**1 The one rule that fixes everything:** change **ONE** variable at a time — usually the grind — and pull a shot between each change. Tweak three things at once and you'll never learn what did what.

Your target numbers

18 g

Dose in  
(weighed)

~36 g

Yield out (1:2  
ratio)

25–30 s

Shot time

195–  
205°F

Water temp  
(90–96°C)

7–21 d

Beans off  
roast

Taste → what it means → the fix

| WHAT YOU TASTE                  | WHAT IT MEANS              | THE FIRST FIX                                    |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Sour, sharp, thin               | Under-extracted (too fast) | Grind <b>finer</b> . Then check temp & time.     |
| Bitter, harsh, drying           | Over-extracted (too slow)  | Grind <b>coarser</b> . Then lower temp slightly. |
| Weak & watery, squirts sideways | Channeling (uneven puck)   | Redo puck prep: distribute + tamp level.         |

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Stale beans

Use whole beans, 7–21 days off roast.

## The dial-in loop

- 1 Weigh your dose (e.g., 18 g). Use the **same dose every time**.
- 2 Grind, distribute the grounds, and tamp level with steady pressure.
- 3 Pull the shot onto a scale — aim for about **2× the dose out** (~36 g) in **25–30 seconds**.
- 4 Taste it. **Sour → grind finer. Bitter → grind coarser.**
- 5 Change **one** thing, pull again, and repeat until it sings.

## Quick wins

- Let the machine fully warm up (15–20 min).
- Run a blank shot to pre-heat the group & portafilter.
- A consistent burr grinder fixes more than any other upgrade.
- Weigh everything — a 0.1 g scale is transformative.
- Expect a learning curve. A few weeks is normal.
- Dark roasts like a slightly coarser grind & cooler water.

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