
SCAA Standard | Water for Brewing Specialty Coffee

Published by the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA)

Revised: November 21, 2009 • Pages: Cover + 1



Purpose

The Statistics & Standards Committee of the Specialty Coffee Association of America has determined the following standards for the water used to brew specialty coffee. For a superior quality extraction of coffee solids, the brewing water should have these characteristics:

Characteristic	Target	Acceptable Range
Odor ¹	Clean / Fresh, Odor free	
Color ²	Clear color	
Total Chlorine	0 mg/L	
TDS ³	150 mg/L	75 - 250 mg/L
Calcium Hardness	4 grains or 68 mg/L	1 - 5 grains or 17 mg/L - 85 mg/L
Total Alkalinity	40 mg/L	At or near 40 mg/L
pH	7.0	6.5 to 7.5
Sodium	10 mg/L	At or near 10 mg/L

¹ Odor is based on sensory olfactory determination

² Color is based on sensory visual determination

³ TDS measured based on a 4-4-2 conversion

The *Target* is the most desirable point in the *Acceptable Range*, although falling within the range is considered meeting the standard. These variances are in place to take into consideration real world circumstances, and the target gives the optimum measurement of each characteristic to strive for.

For details of testing equipment & protocols, please see the SCAA Water Quality Handbook.