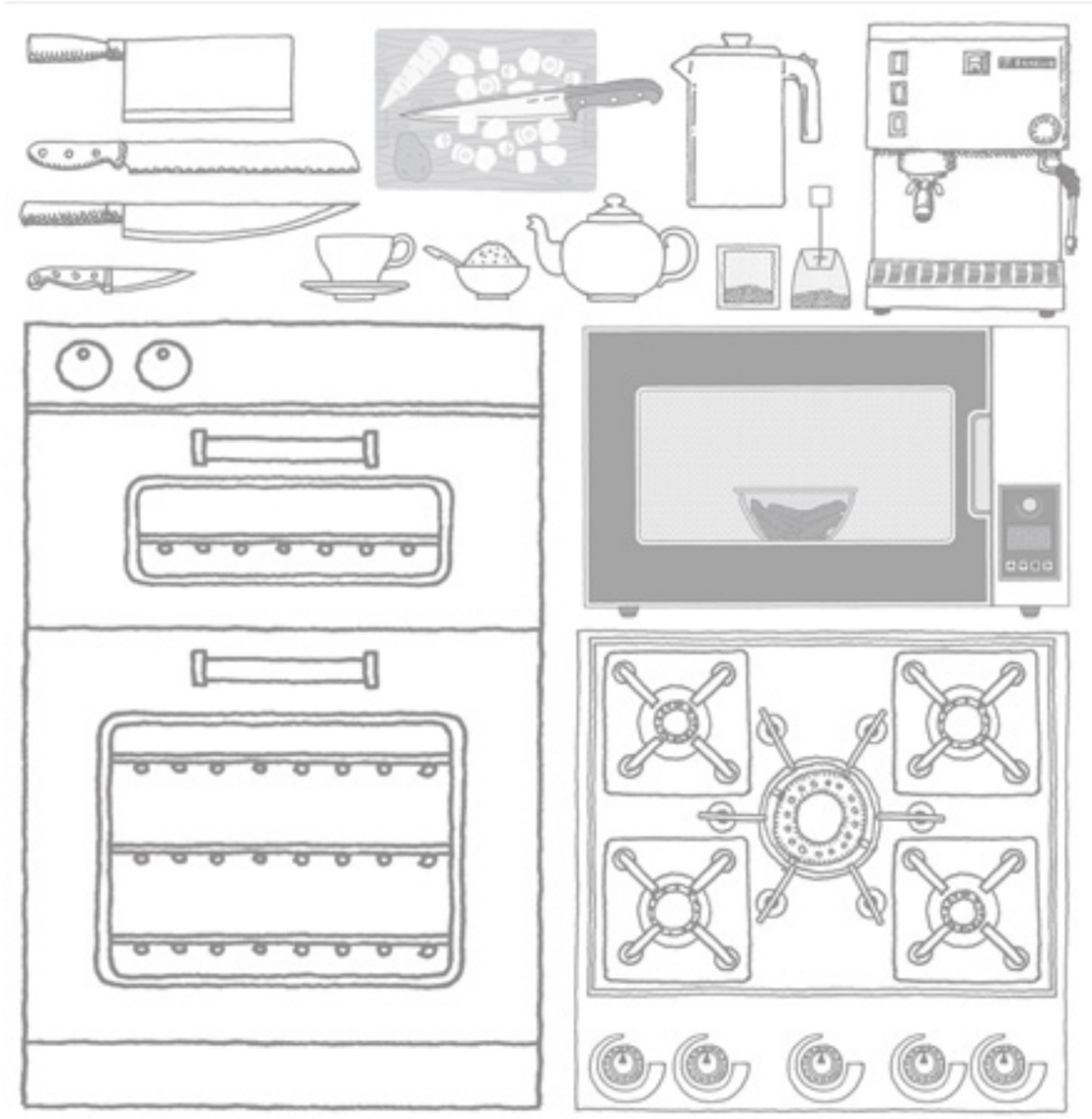
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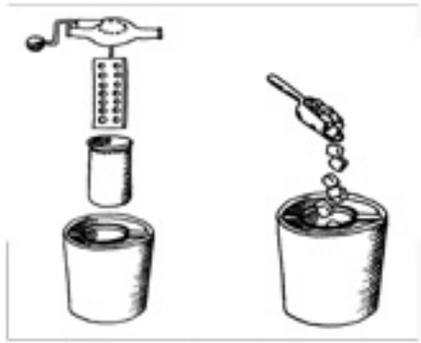
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ICE-CREAM MACHINES

Home ice-cream machines are not as powerful as commercial machines and have limited cooling power. This is important as the smoothness of ice cream is dependent on the size of the ice particles, and that is affected by the freezing time – the shorter the freeze time, the smaller the particles. So first pre-chill the mixture, or, in the case of refrigerated machines, run them empty until the mechanism is cold before adding the mix. The make-up of ice cream/sorbet mix also has an effect on the freezing, with high levels of sugar or alcohol needing longer chilling, so avoid recipes high in these.

HAND-CRANKED MACHINES

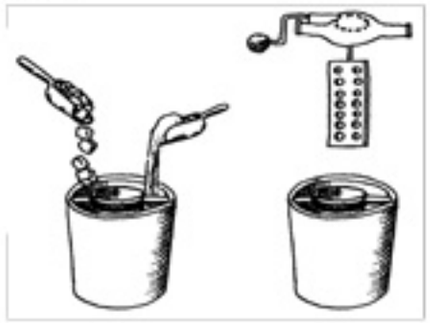
Salt and ice is one of the oldest methods still in use for making ice cream, and it still works extremely well. The cooling power of the mix is very effective and often more so than domestic machines. The downside is the amount of ice, salt, and human effort needed mixing (electric versions of salt and ice machines are available).



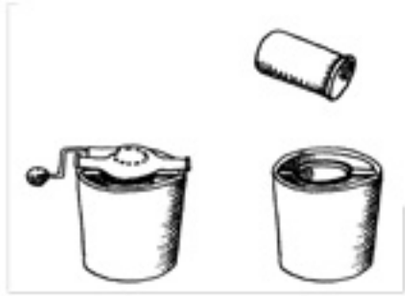
[1] Dissemble the machine, then put some ice in the bucket.



[2] Half-fill the mix container with your mix, then place the container in the bucket.

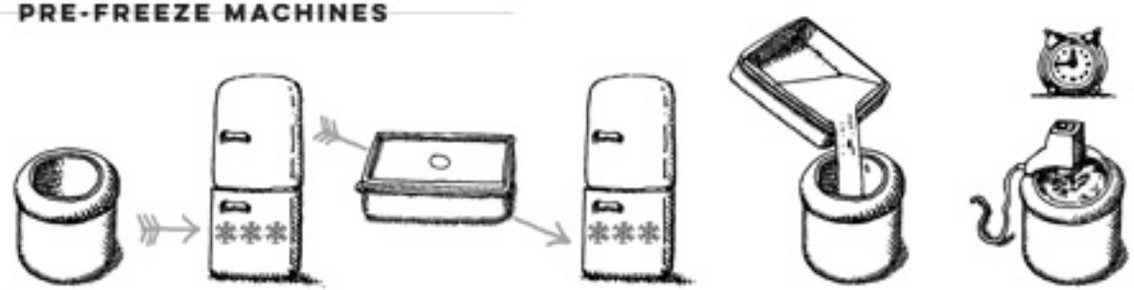


[3] Fill around the container with alternate layers of ice and salt. Fit the beater in place.



[4] Start mixing. Once the mix has thickened and increased in volume, it is ready to serve.

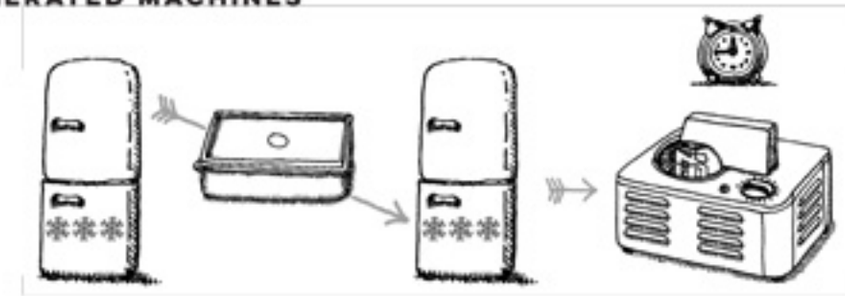
PRE-FREEZE MACHINES



[1] Put the mix in the fridge and the freeze container from the machine in the freezer overnight. About an hour before you want to make the ice cream, transfer the mix from the fridge to the freezer.

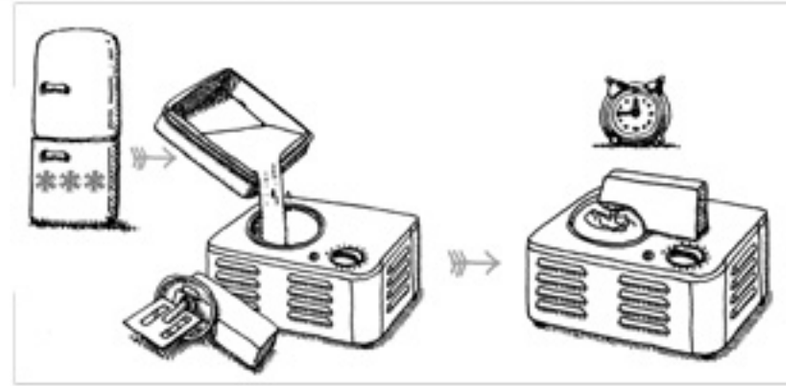
[2] Pour the mix into the container, assemble the machine, and turn on. Check on progress; it is 'done' when the volume has increased and the texture is as thick as whipped cream but heavier.

REFRIGERATED MACHINES



[1] About an hour before making the ice cream, transfer the mix from the fridge to the freezer.

[2] Turn on and run the machine empty about 15 minutes before adding the mix.



[3] Turn off the machine, add the mix from the freezer, then switch the machine back on.

[4] It's ready when the volume has increased and the texture is as thick as whipped cream but heavier.



COFFEE

HISTORY

Coffee has been drunk in its home lands of the Yemen and Ethiopia for more than a thousand years, but it spread more widely through the Islamic world about 500 years ago. In about 1600, coffee arrived in Venice. At that time Venice was the major trading centre for many goods entering Europe from the rest of the world. Coffee then travelled across Europe and quickly became fashionable. It was taken to the new world of the Americas in about 1650, and in 1723 the French took coffee seedlings to Martinique where it grew well and started to spread through the Caribbean, and then Central and South America.

BIOLOGY

Coffee is a member of the Rubiaceae family of plants that also includes cinchona (from which quinine is extracted), and madder (the oldest source of red dye). There are about 25 coffee species but only two (Robusta and Arabica) are generally used for coffee production, though Liberica, and Dewevrei are grown in very small quantities. The coffee bean is the seed, and grows inside a berry that is sometimes dried and used to make a drink called Cascara, which is very high in caffeine. The beans form inside the berry, usually in pairs but in about 5% of cases a single bean forms and these are known as peaberries. Arabica, which is considered higher quality than Robusta, has two common sub-varieties (Typica and Bourbon) that form the basis of further breeding.

CHEMISTRY

The coffee bean before it is roasted is bitter in taste from the caffeine content. This is produced by the plant to repel insect and animal attack. The bean also contains a huge range of other related chemicals and when the bean is roasted the mix of the these chemicals produces a huge number of further chemicals. By the time the coffee drink is made there are over a thousand chemicals given off, but the main smell is derived from perhaps only a dozen detectable ones. As the coffee cools there is a process called retrogradation which means some chemicals reform. This is why coffee becomes more bitter as it cools, and shouldn't be reheated.

CAFETIÈRE/FRENCH PRESS



Classic cafetière/
French press

The modern cafetière/French press was actually designed by an Italian but the method was previously used in France. A stick with a cloth filter was used to push down the grounds in the coffee before it was served.



How it works

The cafetière is one of the simplest methods for making a good cup of coffee and comprises little more than filtering after brewing. The grind size affects the flavour as the finer the grind the more quickly the bitter flavours are released from the coffee. Small particles may also pass through the filter mesh and 'bitter' the drink in the cup. Therefore it is better to use a coarser grind.



[1] Put 60–70 g (2½–3 oz) of coarsely ground coffee per litre (quart) of water in the cafetière, then add water 'just off the boil'.



[2] Wait 30 seconds before gently stirring until all the grounds are wetted.

GRIND SIZE: medium coarse (like beach sand)



[3] Place the top on the pot and wait for at least 5 minutes but no more than 8 minutes.



[4] Slowly press down the plunger and serve. The coffee is best drunk within 10 minutes.

CAFÉ AU LAIT

French-style 'café au lait' can be made with coffee from a cafetière/French press. It is often served for breakfast in a bowl alongside a croissant.

[1] Heat the milk in a pan until it starts to bubble at the edges. You can add a few drops of vanilla essence or heat the milk with a split vanilla pod (bean), if you like.





[2] Add the hot milk to the coffee in the ratio of 4 parts milk to one of coffee.

