

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Milk Steaming and Frothing Guidelines

This SOP provides **milk steaming and frothing guidelines** to ensure optimal texture and temperature for creating high-quality espresso-based beverages. It covers the selection of appropriate milk types, equipment preparation, steaming technique, froth consistency, temperature control, cleaning protocols, and safety measures. The goal is to achieve creamy, microfoam milk that enhances flavor and presentation while maintaining hygiene and equipment longevity.

1. Milk Selection

- Use fresh, cold milk (below 5°C / 41°F) for best results.
- Whole milk produces creamier microfoam, while skim and alternative milks (soy, oat, almond) also suitable-adjust technique accordingly.
- Do not re-steam or reuse previously steamed milk.

2. Equipment Preparation

1. Ensure the steam wand and milk pitcher are clean and dry.
2. Purge the steam wand by allowing a short burst of steam before use to remove condensation or milk residue.
3. Select the appropriate size pitcher based on beverage size.

3. Milk Steaming Technique

1. Fill pitcher with cold milk to below the spout level (never more than halfway).
2. Insert steam wand tip just below the milk surface, slightly off-center.
3. Turn on steam to full power.
4. Position wand to create a gentle vortex, stretching milk by keeping the tip near the surface for the first 3-5 seconds (listen for a quiet hissing sound).
5. Submerge tip deeper to continue heating, aiming for smooth, creamy microfoam.
6. Stop steaming when milk reaches 60-65°C (140-150°F); do not exceed 70°C (160°F).

4. Froth Consistency

- Aim for glossy, velvety microfoam with fine bubbles ("wet paint" texture).
- Tap pitcher gently on counter and swirl to integrate foam and remove larger bubbles.
- Use immediately-microfoam separates quickly.

5. Temperature Control

Beverage	Target Milk Temperature
General espresso beverages	60-65°C (140-150°F)
Pediatric/extra-hot requests	65-70°C (150-160°F) (Caution: risk of scalding)

6. Cleaning Protocols

1. Immediately after steaming, wipe wand with a clean, damp cloth.
2. Purge steam wand again to clear internal milk residues.
3. Clean pitcher and wand thoroughly after each use with hot, soapy water.
4. Sanitize equipment regularly as per café policy.

7. Safety Measures

- Handle steam wand cautiously; it poses a burn risk.
- Never leave milk unattended during steaming.
- Wear heat-resistant gloves if required.
- Discard any milk left over at end of shift or if left out for extended periods.

Note: Consistent practice and adherence to these guidelines ensure optimal milk quality and maximize customer satisfaction, while protecting health and equipment integrity.