

Draught Beer Quality Workshop: Nitro Beer Dispense

QUESTION	ANSWER
IF I RELEASE ALL THE GAS FROM A REGULARLY CARBONATED KEG AND PUSH IT THROUGH A NITRO FAUCET WITH MIXED GAS, IS THAT THE SAME THING AS POURING A NITRO BEER?	It's not the same, because the properties of nitrogen itself – mostly the smaller bubbles – contribute to the mouthfeel of a “true” nitro beer.
IS THERE A REASONABLY PRICED DEVICE TO MEASURE THE CO2 VOLUME IN A KEG OF BEER BEFORE ADDING NITROGEN?	The devices that I’m aware of (Zahm & Nagle, Gehaltemeter) are very costly. I believe there is something way less expensive called a TapRite Beer Carbonation Tester, but I don’t know how accurate it is, or the process for using one.
WILL A NITRO BEER WORK WHEN USED IN A CROWLER?	No. You cannot maintain the head and creamy mouthfeel of a nitro beer when poured into a crowler or growler.
FOR BEERS ON NITRO, IS IT OKAY TO CARBONATE THE BEER SLIGHTLY IN THE BRITE TANK BEFORE ADDING THE GAS BLEND ON TAP OR NOT CARBONATE IN THE BRITE TANK AT ALL	You are not actually “adding” the gas blend to the beer from the “tap”, or draught system set-up. The gas blend that a nitro beer is dispenses with – 25% CO2/75%N2 simply maintains the carbonation levels of both dissolved CO2 and N2 *that the brewer carbonated the beer with in the brite tank*.
WHAT IS THE ACTUAL RESTRICTION FIGURE WE SHOULD USE FOR A NITRO FAUCET WHEN BALANCING A NITRO LINE?	It has a restriction value of 20 pounds.
IF YOU USE A NITRO INFUSER AT THE KEGERATOR, WOULD PRESSURE CALCULATION AT THE REGULATOR BE THE SAME PROCESS?	Yes. The applied pressure required to maintain the carbonation that the brewer intended is almost entirely based on the CO2 volumes in the beer- 1.0 – 1.7 v/v. Dispensed with 25% CO2 (at standard ABV & elevation) requires an applied pressure of 35PSI (calculated with CO2 v/v of 1.2, from the McDantim EasyBlend app). Infusing N2 at the kegerator won’t change the carbonation level, as the amount that actually dissolves is extremely small. (And the 20 lb of restriction that the faucet has, along with the restriction in the beer line and shank) will balance this high applied pressure.
IS DISPENSING ON 100% N2 MORE ADVANTAGEOUS THAN A BLEND?	If you dispense with 100% N2, the 1.0 – 1.7 v/v of CO2 that was dissolved in the beer in the brewery will not be maintained. So, no, it is not advantageous.