



Level 1 CCP Study Guide – for Exam Version 2.0

Background: On February 15, 2018, USACM released an update to our Level 1 Exam for our Certified Cider Professional (CCP) program. The new exam focuses on 6 areas: (1) Apples, the orchard and history (2) Cider making (3) Flavor and evaluation (4) Cider styles (5) Keeping and serving (6) Food and cider. These areas were chosen to reorient the exam with its intended target audience—service industry and wholesaler professionals.

Much of the detailed cider production information from the original version of the exam has been removed and will likely appear in future advanced levels of CCP. This updated study guide will help you gain an understanding of how to prepare to pass the CCP Level 1 V2.0 exam. All cider style questions in level 1 relate back to the official USACM cider style guidelines.

The exam is 60 questions. Questions are multiple choice or true/false format. You pass the exam with a mark of 85% correct or higher. Your exam fee covers two test attempts.

USACM is actively developing study materials to help would-be exam takers gain the cider knowledge they need to pass the CCP test. Until then, we have a recommended reading list and the below study guide.

APPLES, THE ORCHARD & HISTORY:

You must have a fundamental understanding of the origin of apples in the United States, prominent apple varieties and how the cider industry categorizes them. Additionally you should know the properties that distinguish these categories and how that translates into the taste and style of cider.

- History of apples and their origin
- Effect of prohibition on the US cider market
- Stone fence cocktail history and recipe
- American apples: Propagation, processing and harvesting of apples in U.S.
- Apple categories and their properties: Sweets, Sharps, Bittersweets and Bittersharps
- Apple varieties—be able to class these varieties to their broader category, coordinating cider styles and the impact their properties have on cider:
 - **Heritage Cider Apples:** Kingston Black, Golden Russet, Dabinett, Yarlinton Mill, Harrison
 - **Modern Culinary Apples (also known as table or dessert apples):** Gala, Honeycrisp, Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, McIntosh, Granny Smith, Fuji
 - **Dual Purpose Apples (also known as Heirlooms):** Ashmead's Kernel, Newtown Pippin, Northern Spy, Winesap, Jonathon, Gravenstein
 - **Crab Apples:** Wickson, Hewe's Virginia



- Pear varieties—be able to class these varieties to their broader category, coordinating perry styles and the impact their properties have on perry:
 - **Heritage Perry Pears:** Barland, Butt, Hendre Huffcap, Gin, Brandy, Blakeney Red, Thorn, Moorcroft
 - **Modern Culinary Pears (also known as table or dessert pears):** Bartlett, Bosc, Comice, D'anjou, Seckel
- **Terms to know:** Sugars, Fructose, Tannins, Sorbitol, Acid, Malic Acid, Brix, Grafting, Pome

CIDER MAKING:

- Have a general understanding of the process and terms used when describing how an apple goes from harvest to juice to cider.
- Understand the basic process of fermentation (including the difference between inoculated and wild yeasts) and how fruit, yeast and various methods impact the resulting cider.
- Understanding of the types of yeasts that are used to produce cider
- Understand the purpose and process of barrel-aging a cider vs. stainless steel tanks.
- Understand the various means of and terms related to carbonating a cider: bottle-conditioned, champagne method, force-carbonated
- Additional terms to know: Lees, Pomace, Press, Keeving, Blending

FLAVOR & EVALUATION

- Be able to define the taste characteristics of the following terms: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, umami, astringency, acidic, tannic, floral, fruity, medicinal and phenolic.
- Understand this range and what it means to a cider's flavor: dry, semi-dry, medium, semi-sweet, sweet
- Known that these are terms used to described off-flavors or flaws in a cider
 - Medicinal, solvent-like
 - Sulphur flavors/odors
 - Oxidized, wet cardboard
 - Acetone, nail polish remover
 - Moldy
- 5 step method of cider evaluation: (1) Appearance (2) Aroma (3) Taste (4) Mouthfeel (5) Finish
- Know things to avoid doing so as not to influence your sensory perception
- Additional terms to know: brilliant, viscosity, legs,



CIDER STYLES

- Know the USACM cider styles and methods associated with their production

Standard Styles

Modern Cider
Heritage Cider
Modern Perry
Heritage Perry

Fruit Cider
Spiced Cider
Hopped Cider
Wood-aged Cider
Sour Cider
Ice Cider

Specialty Styles

- Terms to know: Single varietal, seasonal release

STORING & SERVING

Have a basic understanding of:

- The best practices for keeping and storing draft cider
- The basic components of proper draft installation and management
- The best practices of serving and storing packaged cider
- Proper storage of glassware
- Number of 8oz servings in a standard wine-format cider bottle (750mL)
- Number of 3oz servings in a standard ice cider bottle (375mL)
- How to help a customer select a cider right for their taste preference or meal
- Additional terms to know: crown cap, cork and cage

FOOD & CIDER

Have a basic understanding of how to pair cider with food to benefit both the cider and the meal with the following pairing principles:

- Match intensity
- Complement
- Contrast
- Cut
- Complete

Pairings to investigate (we recommend trying them at home!), memorize and understand:

- Cider and pork, generally
- Cider and cheese, generally
- Cider and grilled meats or veggies, generally
- Ice cider and blue cheese
- Wood-aged cider and barbeque
- Dry, sparkling cider and Thanksgiving turkey
- Semi-dry to sweet cider and spicy Asian food